

Vulnerable Populations in the field of Nursing

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In the field of nursing, you will deal with many different types of people who believe in many different values and beliefs. You sometimes will keep conflicted when caring for a specific vulnerable population, but you must provide the best care for each and every one of your patients. To provide the most effective care I feel like every nurse should understand one word and that is cultural competence. Cultural competence can be defined as “a developmental process that builds continuous increases in knowledge and skill development in the areas of cultural awareness, knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, interaction, and skills” (Hood, 2014, p.281). There are six steps that show the importance of cultural competence in nursing care.

Cultural competence is important in nursing because it allows the nurse to provide the best care for each patient individually. It is important to know what could go against someone’s beliefs or values. Having culture competence prevents stereotypes and avoids hateful thoughts about caring for certain patients. The book talks about six steps to acquire good cultural competence including: examine personal values, beliefs, biases, and prejudices, build cultural awareness, learn culturally specific communication strategies, interact with people from different cultures, identify and acknowledge mistakes, and remediate cultural mistakes. Patients always feel more comfortable with someone who is more like them and understands their background. This could allow the patient to become more relaxed and lead to greater overall care. “Culturally competent nurses are essential to providing top-quality services to their patients- translating to better health care in every community” (The Chicago School, 2020).

One vulnerable population that could be tough to care for would be prisoners. Prisoners are very culturally diverse or it is good to understand various races, ethnic groups, and demographics. “In addition to dealing with society’s viewpoint, nurses themselves are faced with

the challenge of looking past the crime and seeing the inmate as a human being” (Christensen, 2014, p. 226). Nurses face the challenge of providing care for someone who potentially harmed someone else’s life. Everyone makes mistakes and no not even crime or what someone does is a mistake but that person could have just been going through a rough time in their time. When you provide the best possible care to them it could change their outlook on life. Like “wow” this nurse is really providing the best care to me even though I am a criminal. Effective care and showing you care could change the prospective these inmates have on life and the mistakes they made. Effective learning about one’s self helps to effectively learn, understand, and build empathy.

If I was delivering care for a prisoner as a nurse, I would want to know the crime that they committed. I feel like knowing the crime that the prisoner committed would help me better understand them. I would want to understand their background and situation. If the prisoner was able to trust you as a person, you could get to know them and better help them with the care they needed. Delivering care for a prisoner would definitely be something challenging to overcome as a nurse, so that’s why I believe getting to know them and their story will better help you to provide the care they need. Some people think all prisoners are bad guys, but truly not all prisoners are like this. These people could have had a rough childhood or just a mistake they made that put them into prisoner. Overall, knowing your patient, knowing they are a prisoner, and getting to know them one on one would help you to provide the best possible care for this individual and hopefully understand that no matter what everyone is human and everyone should be given the best possible care they are receive.

Cultural competence is truly more of the most important concepts to understand as a nurse or in any medical profession. Knowing your patients’ values and beliefs will help to

provide the best possible care they are deserve. No one should be treated differently because they don't have the same background or values as you. Everyone comes from a different lifestyles and no one is perfect. Just knowing how to treat all patients will care and respect of what they believe in will make you the best possible nurse you can be. Always remember that everyone is human and everyone makes mistakes, nobody is perfect by any means.

References

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