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N314: Introduction to Professional Nursing

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“I have neither given nor receive, nor will I tolerate others’ use of unauthorized aid”.

### **Incarcerated Vulnerable Population**

Incarcerated individuals suffer physically, mentally, and emotionally. When incarcerated individuals do not receive the proper care they deserve this often leads to ending up back in prison. Oftentimes than not, almost every individual already has chronic health problems or acute ones that turn into chronic health problems. Increasing health care will improve the survival rate for the incarcerated.

### **Cultural Competence**

Cultural Competence is a “developmental process that builds continuous increases in knowledge and skill development in the areas of cultural awareness, knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, interaction, and skills.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 289) There are six steps that go with cultural competence. Step 1 is examining personal values, beliefs, biases, and prejudices. “Attitudes result from evaluative judgments that may have developed over time, either during childhood or from life experience. A variety of self-report tools can be used to measure cultural sensitivity and demonstrate positive responsiveness to culture.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 289) Step 2 is building cultural awareness. “Cultural awareness serves as an antecedent toward obtaining specific communication strategies and knowledge about other cultures.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 289) Step 3 is learning culture-specific communication strategies to “tear down barriers and provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health care.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 289) Step 4 is interacting with people from different cultures because some cultures don’t interact with other cultures. Step 5 identifying and acknowledging mistakes “because the literature on culturally diverse practices places people into various groups resulting in large clumps of cultural categories, errors of similarities may occur with devastating effects.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 290) The last step is step 6 remediating cultural mistakes. “Correcting

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mistakes requires communication between individuals as well as groups.” (Leddy & Peppers, 2022, p. 291-292) Everyone continues to grow with their culture every day.

### **Importance of Cultural Competence in Nursing**

Cultural competence is an important skill to obtain in nursing school. There are multiple cultural diversity groups that you will have the responsibility of caring for. As a nurse, it is your responsibility to care for the patient no matter what their culture is. “Nurses must be able to understand and appreciate different cultural backgrounds in order to do their job effectively and with the highest degree of care.” (Nurse Journal, 2022) Being able to understand cultural competence and put this into practice will help the nurse to successfully succeed. Although the nurse may have different beliefs, practices, and values the nurse may have to put that aside and put their patient first. “Nurses can develop the ability to tailor and explain treatment plans according to patients’ needs, which may be influenced by cultural practices that don’t fall within the parameters of conventional medicine.” (Nurse Journal, 2022) “Utilizing cultural competence appropriately will allow for deeper connections with patients, you will gain the trust of the patient by being empathetic to their differences and unique needs.” (Nurse Journal, 2022) Nurses will learn how to put cultural competence into practice during nursing school and clinical practice.

### **Incarcerated Needs**

Incarcerated is a vulnerable population when it comes to healthcare. Incarcerated men and women do not receive proper health care, possibly for long periods of time. “People in prisons and jails are disproportionately likely to have chronic health problems including diabetes, high blood pressure, and HIV, as well as substance use and mental health problems.” (Public Health, 2022) “Approximately 44% of people incarcerated in jails and 37% of people in state and

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federal prisons, have a history of mental illness...mental health providers are often unable to provide adequate care as part of a system that is not built to provide health services.” (NAMI) “Poverty, unemployment, lower education levels, housing instability, and homelessness are all more prevalent issues among the criminal justice-involved population than the general population. This population also generally has higher rates of learning disabilities and lower rates of literacy.” (KFF, 2016) Homeless people are “10 times more likely to be incarcerated than the general public.” (Prison Policy, 2022) Some inmates that have been homeless have a positive outlook during the incarceration because their life lacked all the supplies before. Short-term incarceration has a better outlook for health care than long-term.

### **Biases of the Incarcerated**

I do believe that incarcerated people do still deserve the proper healthcare. I have always believed that people deserve second chances, however, depending on the crime. Receiving proper health care could be the factor that changes an incarcerated person's mind about being a better person. Although I do believe there should be a line drawn when receiving care. If the patient keeps going back to their same ways and refusing to be a better person that shows the medical personnel, they are being non-compliant. When incarcerated clients refuse to do more for their health it provides feedback stating they are not willing to get better physically or mentally. I also see the side of people's minds about how they should not provide proper care at all. Them being the families of a loved one that lost their life due to someone harming them. There should be a priority when providing care for physical and mental health. Considering the majority of the incarcerated have previous experiences pertaining to mental health. Killing or purposely harming an innocent person proves they need mental health before physical. Allowing them to receive a better mental state will hopefully provide feedback for their remaining life.

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### **Providing Care to the Incarcerated**

Delivering care to a prisoner could result in putting your personal beliefs before your occupation. Knowing what the prisoner has done could make me treat them differently in how I present them with care. If I prefer not to know what the prisoner has done there is a good chance, they will still tell me. If they would happen to tell me, I would still perform my care because that is my duty as a nurse. Although, this type of information is none of my business, therefore, I do not need to know.

In conclusion, incarcerated men's and women's health care has increased over time. However, the standards still are not where medical personnel would like them to be. Increasing healthcare could be a significant factor in people staying in or leaving prison. Doing this may improve their physical, mental, and emotional health.

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