



SPECIALISTS IN NURSING HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT AS MANAGERS IN THE COVID 19 SITUATION

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ABSTRACT

The pandemics of Covid 19 is taking an enormous human life number and creates uncountable changes of destiny. It states non predictable challenges in front of whole the medical community not only from the clinical and scientific but from the managerial point of view as well.

The aim of the present study is to discover the subjective approaches for problem solving in the Covid 19 hospital ward according to the opinion of the medical professionals – students who are finishing their education in the Nursing Health Care Management at the Department of Social medicine and Health Care Management at Medical Faculty of Trakia University – Stara Zagora.

The tasks of the study are the specific ways of solving the everyday difficulties in nursing health care management of Covid 19 hospital ward to be differentiated and characterized, from the position of senior nurse.

The methods of investigation are the content analysis of students' answers of written tasks and the adequate methods of medico-statistical analysis.

The analysis of the results is done in the context of the nursing health care management theories. It has been established that the senior nurses will use most often their abilities to solve the problems and to manage conflicts. The acquired knowledge and skills for time management have a significant role as well. In general, the effective nursing health care management performed by adequate qualified managers and the role of good practices in this direction are very important especially in such a critical situation as Covid 19 pandemics.

Key words: nursing health care management, education, qualified medical professionals, Covid 19 hospital ward

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of 2019 a virus infection has been developing. It is a pandemic that has spread almost immediately in all over the world forming very serious problems. The Covid 19 pandemic is taking an enormous human life number and creates uncountable changes of destiny. It states non predictable challenges in front of whole the medical community not only from the clinical and scientific but from the managerial point of view as well. In the situation when so many aspects of normal human life are concerned there is an enormous need of different types of help,

especially medical help. Medicine is challenged not only to prevent, diagnose and cure the Covid 19 infection but to organize appropriately the health care.

AIM

The aim of the present study is to discover the subjective approaches for problem solving in the Covid 19 hospital ward according to the opinion of the medical professionals – students who are finishing their education in the Nursing Health Care Management at the Department of Social Medicine and Health Care Management at

Medical Faculty of Trakia University – Stara Zagora.

The tasks of the study are the specific ways of solving the everyday difficulties in nursing health care management of Covid 19 hospital ward to be differentiated and characterized, from the position of senior nurse.

METHODS AND OBJECTS

The method of investigation is the qualitative content analysis of students' answers of written tasks – open questions. (3) Two courses are included, both of them having bachelor degree that is the basic requirement for applying for the candidate student's exam to enter the master program in the Nursing Health Care Management. The first course is formed of students who have received bachelor degree in Nursing Health Care Management and the second – bachelor degree in Nursing and Midwifery.

The main question is: "What would you do in order to organize the activities of a new established Covid 19 hospital ward if you were appointed as a senior nurse?" The written answers of this open question, 20 as a number, are analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the results is done in the context of the nursing health care management theories. First of all, the style of management is studied. The scientific base is the theory of leadership and different styles - oriented to the people or to the organizational tasks. Most of the students included in the investigation prefer the democratic or oriented towards the people style. There are only 3 answers in favor of the autocratic or oriented towards the tasks style. This result can be discussed in different meanings. (7, 9-11) From one point of view, the senior nurse does not have many opportunities to influence the organization politics but she can use the connection with her colleagues based on trust and understanding. This approach could be truly successful. From the other point of view in the emergency situation with lack of nurses, insufficient material supplies and many other unpredictable difficulties the autocratic style could be more appropriate. It would be better to work with newly appointed or inexperienced

nurses using the directive approach oriented toward achieving organizational tasks.

The training in Nursing Health Care Management gives specific knowledge skills and attitude. A big part is dedicated to communication skills. The textbooks and the specific literature underline the central role of these skills in the work of senior nurse. (1, 4, 7, 9, 10) The results of this study have shown the importance of communication skills as well. It has been established that the students in a role of senior nurse in Covid 19 ward will use most often their abilities to solve the problems and to manage conflicts. According to the answers most of them prefer innovative approaches. In particular an individual meeting with the colleagues involved in the conflict situation, using specific skills for conflict management and using empathy and openness to different opinion are in the majority of answers. Active listening, appropriate nonverbal communication and involving head nurse or head of the ward in some cases are proposed as specific ways of solving the difficult situations. These results correspond to the commentaries in specific literature and to our previous investigations as well. (5, 6, 8-10)

The acquired knowledge and skills for time management have a significant role as well. The senior nurse is the person whose duty is to prepare the monthly and the everyday time table having in mind the insufficient number of nurses as general, the absence due to disease leave and many other facts that are hardly to predict even on the day by day basis. This simple activity could be very energy consuming duty causing stress and conflicts. In our previous studies we discovered that even in a normal situation the nurses in a higher position had experienced stress that was a serious danger for their health and work satisfaction. (6, 8) In pandemic situation this danger is much more bigger. That is why certain training is needed. It is a part of both the theoretical and practical training especially in the master program for bachelors in Nursing Health Care Management. A separate obligatory subject named "Time management" is included in the program mentioned above.

According to the answers, the other measure in order to manage effectively the Covid 19 ward is

to educate the two categories nurses – the newly appointed and/or inexperienced. The hygienic workers must be trained as well. Using algorithms in verbal or in written forms, asking experienced nurses to become trainers, having short everyday instructions with all members of the nurse team are the most preferred activities in this direction. Concerning training of the hygienic workers, the aim is to explain how important is to follow the rules when performing their duties and controlling them regularly.

Summary:

In general, the study shows that the effective nursing health care management performed by adequate qualified managers and the role of good practices in this direction are very important especially in such a critical situation as Covid 19 pandemic. Using effective communication skills, especially active listening, appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication in both vertical and horizontal communication are preferred by the investigated nurses, who are finishing their education in Nursing Health Care Management. Expressing empathy and willingness to help in conflict situations, applying conflict management skills prevail in the answers. The most preferred style is an innovative one, which is a combination of different conflict management styles and some new approaches. Time management skills and knowledge and skills for training the new and/or inexperienced nurses and hygienic workers are explained in the written answers as ways for effective management of Covid 19 hospital ward by the senior nurse.

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