Essay

Communication systems in nursing

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Patient care in most cases involves a number of individuals who need to be aware of the patient's conditions for them to know how to manage it. Consequently, it shows that there is an increase in use of information and communication technologies to help and support health care services. However, Mandil, Ball, Hannah, Newbold & Douglas (2013), claim that these communication technologies do not receive the attention required. Given the poor attention these communication systems like electronic mail, telephone calls or call lights are receiving, this essay will focus on the reasons why there are arising communication problems in health services. The essay will also focus on how to improve on nursing informatics in order to maintain and develop medical data and systems to support the practice of nursing as well as improve patient care outcomes.

According to Schuster &Nykolyn (2010), there is still an enormous gap in the understanding of the role of communication systems and services in health care. Hospital communication mistakes and failures such as a medical error or wrong diagnostic error have resulted to a number of consequences both for medical providers and for patients. For one, these mistakes have resulted to the hospital having a bad reputation and in extreme situations, death of patients. Veenema, (n.d.) argues,"the health care professionals are always under pressure and in many states the resources are inadequate compared to the demand for access (Veenema, 2012)."

TigerConnect (2019) claims the root cause of malpractice results from a breakdown in communication between a healthcare professional and the patient. From the research conducted, it was found out that 71% of the malpractice claims were because of a doctor or nurse -patient relationship problem as patients perceived their health care professionals as uncaring. Thirteen percent of the patients' regarded the health care professionals as poor listeners as 16% did not care, as their only concern was to get well regardless of how the health care professionals behaved towards them ("How to Improve Hospital Communications Systems | TigerConnect", 2018).

The table below shows how different health care professionals are involved in the management and care of a single patient who has been ordered for a laboratory results (Coiera, 2017).
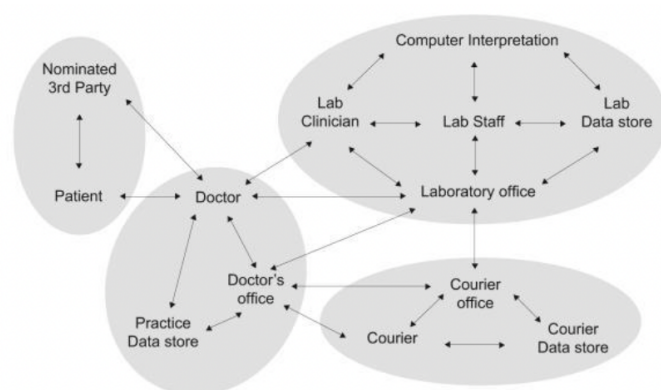
This is clear indication that advanced communication systems are valuable and beneficial to both the health care professionals and the patients hence much effort should be devoted to developing electronic communication systems to support hospital operation.

Radio paging, use of mobile phones and face-to-face meeting are ways of communicating between both patients and staffs, which has enabled the doctors and nurses to respond to an emergency quickly (TigerConnect, 2019). However, Altman, Butler &Shern, (n.d.) claims those pagers become a barrier especially when they have to confirm whether the number given is engaged or if the patient has been moved to a different ward. As for mobile phones, in as much as the staff becomes readily available compared to paging, they always have an option of choosing which call to answer regardless of the fact that the staff are always expected to suspend their work to handle phone calls. Face-to-face meeting becomes an interruption because the staff tends to suspend active tasks to deal with other the interruption.

Asynchronous channels like voice mails or emails may be the best option compared to telephone calls and pagers as so and so argues especially when sending updates on patients' results or making non-urgent requests. In addition, there is need to ensure central Clinical Communication and Collaboration (CC&C) is available at all times as it integrates with other technologies like EHR and diagnostic systems. A good CC&C is not only encrypted to protect patients' sensitive medical records, it is also able to present the right information across all devices, which enhances communication and treatment between both patients and health care staffs.

Nurses provide information necessary through technology, data collection and first hand observation to improve patient care. The number of nurses actively participating in health information technology and electronic documentation is on the rise. This is because "the current generation is computer literate hence they are looking for more opportunity to use a computer or any other electronic device"(Murphy, Goossen&Weber, 2017). Consequently, Hickey &Brosnan, (2017) claims that health care organizations that work to develop nursing informatics often result to increased patient satisfaction hence more improved clinical outcomes. Quality and efficiency of care provided to patients are often assessed by observing how effective nurses are at caring for their patients.

In conclusion, quality communication between nurses and patients is a core component of healthy relationships and co-operation. This also results to less medical errors as effective communication and communication systems enhance professional nursing practice. Nurses are encouraged to possess information communication skills and technology in order for them to be able to convey clear information to patients and their families.

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