**Integration of IT into Nursing Practice**

**Introduction**

Nursing practice is an area that has evolved over the years. A few years ago practicing nursing was not as easy as it is now. Technology has been introduced thus enhancing the practice into a better and more effective form. Before the invention of technology, everything was done manually leading to shortage of nurses and essential requirement. This has however improved as there are redesigned healthcare strategies that help modify and substitute the manual working. The technological innovations have not only positively affected nursing practice but have also improved patients’ outcome. In this topic, the various methods through which IT has improved nursing practice will be discussed together with how it may affect the use of health IT in the future.

There is the introduction of wireless communication system. This is one of the most important mediums of channeling communication from one device to the other through air. This ranges from smart phones, computers, laptops, Bluetooth technology and printers. The practice has acquired the use of badges or headsets to integrate communication. Through wireless communication, automatic routine calls can be made and assigning of different patients to nurses can easily be made. The patient’s health data and records can also be monitored through wireless communication. For instance, in times of emergency or sensitive situations the nurses can be alerted and a proper way to deal with the emergency be induced. This therefore explains how integration of IT into nursing practice has played a major role which would not have been possible without it.

Secondly there is the introduction of point of care technology. This involves a process where nurses and other health professionals carry technology that scans barcodes and immediately gives information of the patient’s condition and medical history sending it to the relevant medium to be observed by the medic. This has eased the process of carrying charts, files and work books around or even retrieving emails for vital patient information. Once the barcode has been scanned all the necessary information is shown thus speeding the process that would have taken a longer time without the presence of the technology. With this technology, the nurses can easily see lab results from one department to the other or reports from different health care providers. As much as the technology has brought about change and faster management of patients, it requires proper training to operate and analyze together with basic critical thinking skills to be able to fully and perfectly interpreted information.

Integration of IT into nursing practice has also enabled real time location of services. For instance, nurses are required to track down vital equipment which are time wasting as one is not sure how long the process would take. That time that is wasted would rather be channeled to focus on more pressing nursing duties that would save lives and better the living of people. Therefore, codes or chips are usually embedded in the medical equipment using indoor positioning systems which will instantly locate the equipment with much of wasted time. This has also reduced theft or misuse of the equipment saving money for repair or replacement by the nursing departments. Similarly, this technology can be used by patients suffering from mental illnesses by fitting them with badges or wrist bands which will enable them to be easily tracked in case they disappear. This can also enable creation of electronic borders to set off alarms when patients cross them thus preventing them from wandering off to unknown locations or even causing harm to themselves. This therefore is a major invention of integrating IT into nursing practice which would not be perfect without it.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is worth noting that technology will highly impact health IT in the future in various ways. As per now, everything is moving faster towards technology thus positive impacts have been realized in different aspects. Health IT will evolve into a fast and reliable service since it will be easier to access documents and medical history of patients, tracking of nursing equipment and fast responses towards emergencies made possible. The future of nursing practice is bright when IT is integrated.

**References**

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