

**Professional paper**

## **MODERN TRENDS IN MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING HEALTH**

**Divna Kekuš<sup>8</sup>**

College of Sports and Health, Belgrade, Serbia

**Abstract:** The World Health Organization (WHO) defines nursing as a comprehensive activity of nursing profiles in the health care process of treating patients, preventing diseases and maintaining human health. Nursing is one of the complex professions whose activities range from simple/manual actions to activities requiring a high degree of professional knowledge, critical thinking, reasoning and application of scientific principles. Medical education as an independent discipline and an integral part of nursing is a medical pedagogical discipline that promotes the improvement of people's health culture with the basic goal to educate healthcare individuals and groups that will regard health as the highest value, ready to make reasonable efforts for their health. Objective was to show and highlight the importance of nursing within the framework of modern nursing care and health promotion. Method was descriptive analytical. Results: In preserving and improving health, the application of health education methods encompasses and includes formal and informal teaching and learning systems such as communication methods - lectures, discussions, information and therapeutic interviews. The training methods include working in a small group, creative workshops, live demonstrations, simulation exercises, dramatization, socio-drama, case studies, etc. Conclusion: Health care and modern nursing in our community are undergoing intense development. Due to scientific achievements, new requirements for the quality of nursing professional activities in the framework of health care and education for improvement and preservation of health are imposed. They are realized by formal education and continuous training in the field of nursing and modern nursing for the preservation and improvement of human health through the promotion of health and healthy lifestyles.

**Key words:** *health care, nursing, health education, training.*

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✉ <sup>8</sup> divna.kekus@vss.edu.rs

## INTRODUCTION

WHO defines nursing as a comprehensive activity of the nursing and midwifery profiles in the health care process and patient care, as well as in preventing diseases and preserving human health. Nursing is one of the complex professions whose activities range from simple/manual actions to activities requiring a high degree of professional knowledge, critical thinking, reasoning and application of scientific principles. WHO also defines the term of nursing in the sense that a nurse is a person who has completed a nursing education and who is qualified and authorized to perform responsible tasks in the field of health promotion, prevention of illness and patient care (Kekuš, 2014; Tijanić i sar, 2013). On the other hand, health education as an independent discipline and as an integral part of care and modern nursing is seen as a medical and pedagogical discipline that promotes the improvement of people's health culture with the basic goal of health care individuals and groups who will regard health as the highest value and who will be ready to make reasonable efforts for their health and community health.

### **Modern nursing in maintaining and improving health**

Nursing is a term which implies the entire activity of nurses, which includes their participation in the preservation of health and prevention of diseases, care and treatment of diseases as well as the health care process (Tijanić et al, 2013). Quality health care in the improvement and preservation of health is provided in accordance with established standards and principles of the nursing profession and can be viewed from the aspect of the quality of the structure, processes and quality of the outcome (Webster, 2000). From numerous definitions it follows that nurses gain knowledge through learning the scientific and theoretical principles which are the foundation of skills and methods applied through professional work.

In modern nursing, nurses also create new rules of nursing practice. William Goode distinguished two basic characteristics of each profession. The main characteristics are the continuing education and acquisition of high specialized education in the endeavor of the members of the profession to provide specialized services to a defined group of users according to their needs.

The basic features of professions are the following:

- The theoretical framework;
- A specific type of services;
- Autonomy in making decisions in practice;
- An ethical code and application in practice;
- Professional organization (association);
- Research;
- An educational structure to a Ph.D. degree;

- Continuous education.

In the development of nursing within health care, the criteria, standards and norms of nursing practice are created. Contemporary nurses in the world are full members of the International Council of Nurses - ICN, which affirms nursing through professional practice, and which is directly related to education.

The basis for the provision of specialized services is primarily the theory of nursing as well as the theory of biological, anthropological, behavioral, psychological and sociological sciences. Nursing terminology and standardized classifications of nursing practice began to develop in the 70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to The American Nurses Association (ANA, 1991). The most famous classifications are the following:

- The North American Nursing Diagnosis association – NANDA TAXONOMY;
- The International Classification for Nursing Practice, ICNP;
- The Nursing Intervention Classification, NIC;
- The Nursing Outcomes Classification, NOK.

Nursing is increasingly developing as a specific, professional and scientific field of work and it is with increasing success following the development of medicine and other sciences whose area of interest is the preservation and improvement of people's health and the treatment of the ailing. Significant progress is also reflected in the application of the *Nursing Process*, a method that provides such opportunities through determining needs, setting nursing diagnoses, planning, implementing a care plan and evaluating, as well as reaching the set goals. This proves and adjusts the classic understanding of nursing, according to which nurses carry out care mainly upon the doctors' orders, and according to which the care of the patient is only a practical discipline based on the skills and intuition of the nurses (Milutinović, 2014).

### **Improvement and preservation of health**

It is difficult to accurately determine the beginning of health education and the origin of professional belief, the conviction that people will be more aware of their health if they are healthier. To interest an ailing man in recovery is not difficult, but to interest a healthy one for the maintenance and improvement of health is a great challenge. In the world, health education in nursing is taught as an independent discipline, as well as within the framework of social health care, that is, public health care (Kekuš, 2014).

As a result of the development of social, behavioral and communication science in the late 50s, there has been a significant development of the theory and practice of health education. This cooperation with the aforementioned sciences has freed health education of a fixed correlation with a narrow medical model of health and made it open to recognition and other influences that determine human behavior in relation to health. Since then, health education has been mentioned in

three ways: as a special scientific discipline, as a profession and finally, as a measure of health care. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, WHO proposed a change in the name health instruction to Health Education, believing that all health and social care efforts would be reduced if they were not followed by health education. Thus, health education became part of the social efforts to preserve health.

Health education, as an independent discipline and an integral part of health care and modern nursing is considered a medical pedagogical discipline that promotes the improvement of the health culture of with the basic goal of health care individuals and groups regarding health as the highest value, who will be ready to make reasonable efforts for their own health as well as community health.

Looking at health as a dynamic value through the dimensions of physical, mental and social health and through the personal perception of one's own health and functional ability, there is a need for a constant promotion of healthy lifestyles through healthy behavior. This highlights the promotion of health as a combination of health education and other organizational, political and economic programs designed to support behavioral changes and the environment that lead to health promotion (Green). Promoting health is training people to increase control over their health and to improve it (Ottawa Charter, 1986).

A common theoretical framework for explaining the new philosophy of health promotion takes place through a series of strategic commitments and activities organized with the aim of achieving health through a complex and comprehensive sociopolitical process directed towards the individual and the community. Specific Health Education Standards apply to the following:

- Acquiring knowledge about disease prevention and the connection between behavior and health;
- Developing the ability of seeking, choosing and analyzing appropriate information linked with health, health services and means for health maintaining;
- Developing abilities of removing health-risk behavior and establishing behavior which contributes to health;
- Developing abilities of analyzing different impacts on health (culture, media, technology);
- Developing communication skills which contribute to establishing and maintaining healthy interpersonal relations;
- Developing skills of setting aims and decision-making which contribute to health;
- Developing advocacy for the health of individuals, families and the community.

### **Principles and methods of education:**

In the implementation of health education especially with individuals, it is necessary to implement specific goals that include a basis for the patient/client to

learn through developing feelings, as well as to learn how to do something (acquisition of skills). Seven dimensions of health education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of health care are also applied. These are the following:

1. Health, and thus also health education is involved with the entire personality and involves her/his physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual aspects;
2. Health education is a process for the entire life which helps people change and adapt to all life stages;
3. Health education involves people as regards health and illness, thus, the healthy, the chronically ill and the disabled – in the sense of raising health potential;
4. Health education is directed towards individuals, families as well as entire communities;
5. Health education involves people helping themselves and by helping others to create better conditions for every individual and make a healthy choice – “the easiest choice;”
6. Health education includes formal and informal types of training and educating along with the use of different health education methods;
7. Health education impacts changes in opinions, changes in behavior as well as social changes, by realizing aims.

The means and methods of health education are provided by specific health care services that, according to needs, requirements, use and mode of delivery, are often different from other health services. This is carried out with those who have no “health disorder” when a person in the health care process is primarily a *healthy person* and, as a rule, is not very motivated to learn more about how to protect and improve his/her own health. For those who are in a state of “illness,” a special approach is needed. The World Health Organization advocates a social-medical relationship in meeting health education needs according to priority, and according to the following principle: the approach and coverage of those who are more at risk and adhering to the principle of “something for everyone, and more for those who have greater needs.”

The need for health education represents the optimal amount and type of health education that should be provided in order to improve and protect health. Health needs can be determined for an individual, a family, a particular grouping or the whole population, and are defined as professionally determined needs (Webster, 2000). In the implementation of the health education process while determining the needs for health education, it is necessary for each individual to assess the impact of health risks and resources to health.

It is important to mention communication strategies (methods, techniques and medical education). The most important methods are based on all existing types of communication, such as lectures, discussions, as well as individual methods such as interviewing and counseling. Media techniques are used - mass media, audiovisual media, software learning, computer programs (the internet)

and others. Skill strategies include methods of training that are characterized by gaining experience through group work and creative workshops, demonstrations, exercises, simulations - games, dramatization, methods of life demonstration, socio-drama, case studies and modeling methods in behavior modification (Masters, 2014; Debout, 2010).

Health care facilities are combined with several methods of health education and represent a higher quality of health education. The combination is more a method because it makes health education more creative, increases motivation and understanding, as well as acceptance and acquisition of skills. In the application of methods and means, what is important is the message sent as a basic conceptual category that expresses the suggestion, proposal, instruction and orientation in acquiring, adopting, accepting and practical application of certain knowledge.

Communication skills are applied in the consideration of interactions in different situations. In this way, nurses first gain insight into their own way of communication and a good analysis of the style of communication of others, which can later be applied adequately in health practice. Successful communication thus becomes a professional skill. For the successful implementation of health care and health education on health promotion and preservation, interviews and therapeutic communication are mostly used.

Health care and modern nursing in the implementation of work methods on health promotion and nursing provide new roles, where nurses at the same time become the creator and executor of nursing, educator, patient representative, manager, associate, leader and researcher. In addition to working in health institutions, the nurse's field of work is extended to other environments, including the community, schools, social welfare institutions, etc.

## CONCLUSION

The constant development of science and technology brings a number of changes in all areas of life and work of modern man. Modern tendencies in the education of nurses give precedence to education as a priority in the professional development of nurses. From the formal education of nurses in Serbia, which dates back to 1952 when the Red Cross of Yugoslavia opened the College of Nursing, to date, with numerous programs for the education of nurses at faculties and high schools, there is a constant tendency to give the profession a legitimate status, for nursing along with other disciplines to be reflected in its development through improvement and quality of nursing because it is the essence of the nursing profession - humanity and commitment to helping individuals in disease and health.

Health care and modern nursing in our midst is experiencing intense development. Due to intense social changes, scientific achievements and a multicultural environment, new requirements for the quality of nursing professional activities in the framework of nursing care and continuous education

for the promotion and preservation of health are imposed (Dobrowolska et al, 2015; Allender, 2001). This is provided by formal education and continuous education in the field of health care and modern nursing for the maintaining and improvement of human health through the promotion of health and healthy lifestyles as well as the prevention of illness (Kekuš, 2011; Allender, 2001).

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