

OPINION

TREND OF INDONESIAN NURSE'S ROLE IN THE FUTURE

Nurses, as the largest group of health care professionals, do and can have an enormous impact on health care organization and in turn, the health care organization. Indeed, given recent change in health care delivery, the proportion of the nurses working in various health care setting has changed. Approximately 70% of nurses work in hospital, compared with those nurses work in other health care setting. As the demand for nursing service has changed, so has the supply of nurses employed in various health care settings, as clinician, researcher, educator and manager.

For centuries, the primary role of nursing has been to provide patient care. Nurses have carried medical regimens, provided nursing care and assessed and treated patients. They also functioned as aides to physicians. However, this is changing. The nursing profession and the role of nursing have evolved over the years.

Past

Before mid-1800s, nursing care was provided by volunteers, generally men and women of various religious orders who had little or no formal training. Like many other health care professions, modern nursing began in the mid-1800s. The advent of schools for training nurses modeled on the principles of Florence Nightingale. However, the role of nurse was unable to completely shake its old image as a low skilled, little respected task – a perception still present today.

Present

Nursing professionals are struggling to shed their historical stereotype as underpaid female hospital laborers. The profession is attempting to change its role in the health care delivery system. With highly educated practitioners, the leaders of profession have called for an expansion of the independent role of the nurses within the hospital and creation of new professional roles outside hospitals. Nurses are also seeking to clarify their relationship to physicians, particularly within the context of clinical decision-making in the hospital.

Many new roles have emerged for Registered Nurses (RN), including positions as clinical nurse specialist, nurse practitioner, nurse clinician, and case (or care) manager. These positions involve working in a multitude of different settings, such as ambulatory care clinics, nursing homes, others. Career opportunities are also available in utilization and quality review role, continuing education as lecturer in school of nursing, in which nurse participate in inspection of clinical records.

Future

The question for future of nursing is not whether nursing will exist but rather how it will evolve in the changing health care environment. Driving forces of the institutional and economic environments are forcing all aspects of health care system to evolve. The role of nurses in the foreseeable future will be considerably different from what it was even 10 years ago. One trend is the development of a two-tiered profession, with relatively low-skilled (and lesser-paid) and performing traditional routine patient care and highly skilled, high educated (considerably high-paid) professional nurses focusing heavily on managerial duties, care of critically ill patients, and as researcher. Perhaps the biggest change currently facing the nursing profession is the need for nurses to combine traditional role of being patient caregivers with the new role of patient care managers.

A variety of new roles for nurses, particularly for those with master and doctors preparation, will evolve in responses to environmental forces. Among these new roles are case managers, public policy leaders, independent nurse practitioners, clinical researcher, health care administrators, health care prevention coordinator, bioethics consultations, and telemedicine professionals.

The challenge of nurse's role in the future is to recognize that tomorrow belongs to those who continually strive for excellence and to make a difference in the outcome of care. The future can be achieved by embracing **SIX – E's**.

- **Environmental savvy:** Be aware and understand what is going on around you in your institution, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- **Excellence:** Always strive to give the best services possible and to be the best you can.
- **Eclecticism:** Do not become too narrow focused. Recognize the many useful worldviews you can draw on and utilize.
- **Enthusiasm:** Be concerned and existed about your work and the service you give.
- **Effort:** Care about your work and do it well. Make a positive difference.
- **Endurance:** Your most important contributions will be made over the long haul. You can outlast most position.

Our time has come. The opportunity is ours to reposition nursing as a powerful and essential force in this changed environment. Opportunity that is unchallenged remains dormant and useless. Nursing must take on its opportunities and change the role with courage and a clear vision for its future role and potential to make a major positive impact on the health and well-being of the people.

You do not have to be great to start, but you must start it to be great

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