

A Study on Awareness of Community Health Nurses on Legal Aspects of Health Care

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ABSTRACT

Introduction	Health care laws serve as a hallmark in maintaining the equilibrium in the delivery of health care services. It goes without saying that this particular field of activities call for a sound technical and legal knowledge. Moreover community health nursing responsibility includes administering personal health service, supervising other health care workers in providing such services, teaching people and providing information on health to others and recording and analyzing health data. All these involve much of legal aspects and issues imbibed in it.
Methods	Descriptive research technique of non-experimental descriptive design was used. The setting of the study was the Public Health Care (PHC) and Sub Centers at Chennai. The Sample size was 180 Registered Community Health Nurses. A structured questionnaire developed by the author was used. The tool validity and reliability was concurred before its induction. Having received legal opinion, it was divided into (1) Sources of Law, (2) Laws related to Health Care Personnel (3) Laws on Information Management and (4) Laws related to Protection to ensure that all aspects of the Laws in Health Care were covered.
Results	The study reveals that most of the nurses (88%) had moderate knowledge and 12% of them had adequate knowledge on Legal Aspects of Health Care. This result shows that nurses have just moderate knowledge on the laws related to health care and they need more enhancement of it through subsequent continuing nursing education.
Discussion	The present study assessed the knowledge of nurses which led to the start of in-service education in the Community Health Centers such as Journal Presentation. The author presented the first continuing education on the Laws related to the Health Care.
Conclusion	Changes in the health care needs of society have created a demand for changes in health care service. This led the expanded role of nurses into the community. These expanded role need to be concurrently practiced safely for proper health care delivery system. For this, the foundation of awareness of Legal Aspects of Health Care is vital.