Evidence-Based Practice Change Process

Workplace Hazard in Nursing

Student’s Name

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Date

**Discovery**

Working place hazard in nursing is one of the common health related issues, which affect nursing practitioners. These workplace hazards are illness and injuries being sustained at work and therefore, it is important to understand them well. According to Alavil (2014), majority of nurses experience job related pain resulting from long working hours and injuries sustained during the course of their work. A study conducted by Alavil (2014), indicates that in average 89% of nurses in Netherland suffer from musculoskeletal pain, 74% in the lower back and 48% on their knee. (Alavil, 2014) A study also indicates that shoulder and neck injury is also common among nurses all over the world. Most of the pains being experience by nurses are due to lift and moving of patients, which is being done manually in most healthcare facilities.

Research also indicates that stress and work overload is some of the issues, which threaten the health status of nurses and can result to fatigue and burnout (Alavil, 2014). Nurses usually work in shift for longer hours. And in difficult settings in the emergency and oncology wards and taking care of incurable patients puts a lot of physical and spiritual pressure on nurses. This has made fatigue to be a common feeling among nurses globally. In a study conducted to establish the fatigue among nurses. It is discovered that 43.3% of nurses experience a lot of fatigue (Alavil, 2014); the fatigue could affect the performance of nurses if not addressed properly. Nurses are also at risk of getting exposed to communicable and contagious diseases such as HCV, HIV and HBV, which are related to blood borne pathogens. This could be due to needle – stick injuries and therefore, these are issues, which are threat to the health of majority of nurses.

It is approximated that 600000 to 800000 needle stick injuries happen every year in majority of healthcare facilities. Mitchell, Hastings, Fisher, Silverman and Wallen (2010) pointed that 12% of these injuries are injection related, 17% are suturing ad 16% are as a result of drawing blood and therefore, these are the main causes of exposure in the nursing practices, which threaten the health of nurses worldwide. Other diseases such as tuberculosis, acute respiratory syndrome and staphylococcus infection are also some of the infectious diseases, which can easily afflict nurses when performing their duties. Besides infections nurses also continue to experience violence at their workplace. A study conducted by Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) established that 53.4% of nurses experience either physical or verbal violence and almost two out of ten nurses have reported to have experience physical violence at workplace (Mitchell, Hastings, Fisher, Silverman, & Wallen, 2010). This posed a big threat to the nursing fraternity and therefore, makes it difficult to perform their work efficiently.

**Rationale**

In the last three decades, several casualties related to healthcare have been reported by healthcare settings. Several nurses have been exposed to diseases and ended up dying due to the exposure. This put the life of nurses at risk. The workplace hazard in nursing is therefore, an important aspect in nursing practices, which must be addressed to safeguard the lives of millions of nurses worldwide. Studies have shown that little have been done to address these hazards especially in developing countries (Camargo, Iwamoto, & Galvão, 2017). In the United States, much have been done through legislation and policy implementation by healthcare institutions, but a lot still need to be done. The choice of workplace hazard in nursing is meant to study the trend in the nursing practice and provide the best intervention techniques, which can be used by professional in the nursing field to address the threats of exposure and other hazards, which can endanger the life of nurses.

**Evidence Summary**

The workplace hazard in nursing is common due to working condition in most healthcare settings. Most healthcare settings have few nurses and therefore, the available nurses are overworked. Nurses sit for long hours in order to provide services to patients. This results into back pain, shoulder and knee injuries, which are very fatal. However, the PICOT is question, which should be ask to provide guidance to solve the issue of workplace hazard in nursing is “does the workplace hazard in nursing result to poor health care provision to patients?” PICOT question is meant to provide appropriate mechanism of answering the evidence based practice in nursing to find a solution of various problems being faced by nurses at their workplace. Research has indicated that the life of patients depend on the status of nurses and therefore, important to ensure that nurses are in good health. Workplace hazards are related to injuries and pain and the injuries and pain are caused by carious happenings within the health sector.

Parkosewich (2013) argued that workplace hazard in nursing have direct correlations with the service delivery. Efficient and professional service delivery depends on the condition of workplace. According to Parkosewich (2013), a stressed and fatigue nurse cannot perform his or her duty well and this affect the rate and quality of service delivery in most healthcare settings. The article illustrates the various workplace hazards in nursing such as back pain, stress, fatigue, and exposure to blood and contamination and others. However, the article did not mention any intervention techniques, which should be applied to address the condition to ensure that the workplace hazard in nursing is addressed. Research has also indicated that more than 3000 nurses are affected annually. This can derail the professional service delivery. A study by established that most nurses who have been affected related workplace hazards have died. Nurses get exposed to accurate diseases and in some cases nurses end up dying due to this the diseases exposed to at workplace. Alavil (2014) pointed that injuries, cold and flu and exposure to blood pathogen are common workplace related hazard in nursing. It is noted that these nurses are exposed to these hazards because of the hours they take working in congestion wards. It also because nurses take longer time taking care of patients. The article did not point the actual number of casualties related to injuries, stress, fatigue, exposure to blood pathogen and others, of nurses annually. This kind of statistical respond would help in deriving a question and in the provision of interventions.

The finding indicates that some of the injuries and other related workplace hazards are common due to carelessness of nurses. A study by Porkosewitch (2013) established that most healthcare settings in the United States have policies and required settings to provide efficient and quality working environment to nurses. But some nurses ignore the basic procedures and this has led to several casualties and therefore, an implementation of policies should be strict as a matter of helping nurses and preventing exposure to injuries and other workplace hazards. The findings also indicate that most casualties happen at night for nurses on night shift. It is indicated that 35% of incidences of injuries, which had happened in most healthcare settings in the United States happen at night. This means that nurses are exposed to hazard when on their night shift compared to day (Parkosewich, 2013).

In relationship to service deliver, the finding indicates that workplace hazard result to poor quality of service delivery. A report shows that when one nurse get exposed to blood pathogen, or any other relate hazards, his or her colleagues become scared to handle patients with similar condition. This could deny patients quality healthcare service delivery. It is therefore evident that workplace hazard in nursing have direct impact in the quality of healthcare service delivery. Therefore, it is important to find the best mechanism to address the problem of workplace hazards in nursing to ensure that patient could receive treatment without discrimination due health condition of a patient. The evidence is strong because the study was conducted using qualitative and quantitative research method, where structured questions were used to conduct the study (Mitchell, Hastings, Fisher, Silverman, & Wallen, 2010). It was conducted using various samples from several healthcare settings in the United States. The research method is therefore, quality and represents a wider demographic, which means that it brought in a wider aspect of nursing practice. The findings are detailed and can be used to address the problem affecting nurses in most of their workplace settings (Camargo, Iwamoto, & Galvão, 2017). It is therefore; evident that workplace hazard in nursing is directly related to the healthcare provision in most healthcare settings in the country.

It is therefore, important to implement several intervention techniques to address the problem. The best solution could be the introduction of safe patient handling program, policy establishment to address negligent, and introduction of hand hygiene protocol in all healthcare facilities. This is likely to help in minimizing cases of injuries and other hazards affecting nurses.

The health status of nurses and can result to fatigue and burnout (Alavil, 2014). Nurses usually work in shift for longer hours. And in difficult settings in the emergency and oncology wards and taking care of incurable patients puts a lot of physical and spiritual pressure on nurses. This has made fatigue to be a common feeling among nurses globally. In a study conducted to establish the fatigue among nurses. It is discovered that 43.3% of nurses experience a lot of fatigue (Sentinel Watch, 2017); the fatigue could affect the performance of nurses if not addressed properly. Nurses are also at risk of getting exposed to communicable and contagious diseases such as HCV, HIV and HBV, which are related to blood borne pathogens. This could be due to needle – stick injuries and therefore, these are issues, which are threat to the health of majority of nurses.

**Action plan**

**Policy formulation**

The best strategy to address the cases of workplace hazard in nursing is policy formulation. Research indicates that the common workplace hazards in nursing are injuries, exposure to other diseases and stress. These issues can be addressed effectively through policy realignment to ensure that nurses and other healthcare practitioner observe the policies for their own benefit. First, the Secretary of health directs all healthcare facilities to implement “preserve the hands of caregivers.” It will ensure that nurses are not getting easily affected through their hands when in direct contact with patients. A study has indicated that 15% of nurses incurred hand injuries when handling patients and this expose them to diseases (Mitchell, Hastings, Fisher, Silverman, & Wallen, 2010). Therefore, a strict policy regarding their wearing of protective gloves would help in reducing cases of injuries. The healthcare facilities should be required to provide protective gloves to nurses to help in reducing the cases of injuries, which is common at the workplace.

The healthcare stakeholders should also implement hand washing policy to help in reducing the cases of infections. A recent study conducted by the University of Manchester established that healthcare workers, who follows the healthcare hand hygiene are 4.5 time more likely to obtain severe skin damage. This means that hand washing is an important factor in addressing the healthcare hazard related to nursing. In the same study, researchers established that several healthcare workers suffer hand related condition and therefore, establishment of hand wash policy would be evidence based solution to the problem affecting nurses at their workplace. The healthcare facilities should have a clear internal policy in regard to washing of hands to prevent several cases of hand damage or infection, which have been experienced over the last year.

**Patient handling Program**

It is essential to ensure that nurses are equipped with advanced knowledge and skills on the way patients should be handled to avoid contamination and injuries. Nurses should also be provided with mobile fully equipped kit for handling patients (Parkosewich, 2013). Since every patient has a unique handling technique, it would be important to ensure that nurses are equipped with various techniques of handling patients based on the condition of the patient. The administration needs to provide education and tools, which are available, provide assistance to nurses so that they do not use a lot of force to lift, move or manage a patient. Since most patients cannot work properly and therefore, require assistant to get mobility, the availability of equipment or moving lift would be helpful in assisting patients and therefore, this is likely to reduce the number of casualty being experience by nurse daily at their workplace.

The administration must provide equipment, which include a mobile full body floor lifts to help in moving and managing of patients. It should be able to have a position for standing like sit to stand lift and an assistant aids. It must also have an overhead ceiling to track system and slings or accessories. This will provide the best solution for moving and handling patients in the hospitals or any other healthcare settings.

For the intervention to succeed, all the stakeholders must be involved in the formulation and implementation of the policies. The federal and state governments are key partners in the intervention plan. The federal government through Secretary of health policies can be formulated financed and implementation monitored and evaluated. Therefore, the responsibilities of the government is to come up with the workable policy, finance and provide supervision as well to ensure that every nurse and other healthcare practitioners are practicing based on the policy (Sentinel Watch, 2017). Other key stakeholders are the healthcare administration, nurses, and patients. Every stakeholder has clear responsibilities to ensure that the practice is achieved and the healthcare standard is kept. The nurses’ responsibilities are to ensure that all the necessary policies and laws are properly adhered to. This would help in reducing cases of injuries and other related hazards are prevented. The nurses and other healthcare practitioners must work together to realize the change. The administration also must ensure that all the requirements are available for nurses and the schedule and time for shift are properly allocated to make sure that no feel discriminated or over burden.

**Implementation**

The implementation of the intervention would be done in phases to ensure that it is completed done. First, the mobilization of federal government to intervene on the formulation of policies, to ensure that it captured all the aspects of hazard required. The government bodies especially the secretary of health will be conducted with the proposal to initiate a policy paper to be approved by the cabinet. This policy would ensure that various legislations or healthcare policies, which can solve the problem is captured. Once the policy paper has been enactment it would be required for all healthcare facilities to have an elaborate plan or strategies to address the problems, which affect nurses at the workplace.

**Evaluation**

The evaluation would be done through survey to determine the changes, which have taken place since the intervention methods were implemented. The survey will be conducted to determine the effective of the intervention. The survey intends to determine the decline or increase of the number of workplace hazards in nursing. The survey is important in establishing the effect o the study and therefore, it will be conducted across the country, in healthcare to establish the effect and the changes, which have been realized. It will be done in phases periodically after every six months to ensure that effect is properly monitored. It will help in establishing counter strategies if any case there is a loop hole during the implementation stages.

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