

Nursing 4210: Health: Transitions

Learning Activity #5
Primary Health Care in the Community

Overview:

Community based Nursing implies a nursing philosophy that guides nursing practice focused on individuals, families, and groups wherever they are, including where they live, work, play, access health services, or go to school. A major approach common to community based nursing is health promotion education and strategies. Health promotion is commonly defined as a process for enabling people to take control over and improve their health (Health Canada, 1996).

In 1978 the World Health Organization (WHO) presented an approach for health care that would ensure a global level of health to all citizens by the year 2000. This approach was called primary health care which included the practice of health promotion, prevention, and population health. The 2003 Canadian Health Care Accord introduced an agreement of all Canadian First Ministers to accelerate primary health care initiatives across the nation. This was a renewal and call to action first begun by the First Ministers in 2000 as a response to WHO's directive. An \$800 million initiative called the Primary Health Care Transition Fund was set up in 2003 to begin the process in earnest.

Basically, primary health care is 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, accessible, quality care offered by multidisciplinary coordinated teams of health care professionals. Front-line professionals focus on health promotion, chronic illness management, and the prevention of illness and injury in a collaborative and cost-effective way. Basic principles of primary health care include: accessibility, public participation, health promotion, appropriate technology, and intersectoral cooperation. Both the RNABC and the Canadian Nurses Association whole-heartedly support the concept of primary health care as the foundation or context for nursing practice in British Columbia and across Canada. This impacts on nurses in all care settings, from the acute care hospital to community outreach programs.

Ends In View:

This learning activity is intended to give the learner the opportunity to:

1. Explore the principles and rationale for primary health care nursing in BC.
2. Brainstorm applications of primary health care models for nursing.

3. Recognize the ethical and professional obligation of nurses to promote quality primary care.
4. Explore the role of nursing in meeting the goals of primary health care in the health care system, including the community setting.

In Preparation:

1. **Read:** Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia. (2002). *Primary Health Care: Position Statement*. Vancouver, BC. <http://www.rnabc.bc.ca/pdf/339.pdf>
2. **Read:** “Primary Health Care in Transition?” in *Health Care in Canada* (2003, CIHI), pages 33 - 42. http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/products/hcic2003_e

In Practice:

1. Participate in the *Forum Discussion* related to the principles and trends in primary care in BC.
2. Primary health care addresses the main health problems of a community, providing promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services accordingly. The RNABC supports the idea of community health centres as a core service for providing primary health care. In your *Journal*, write a one paragraph description of an ideal community health centre for your local community, emphasizing the role of nurses within the centre.
3. In “Primary Health Care in Transition” (CIHI, 2003) a comparison is made between Primary Medical Care (often called Primary Care) and Primary Health Care. Create a table like the following one and complete the third column. How would nursing care fit into the Primary Health Care approach described?

Primary Medical Care	Primary Health Care	Nursing Care
FOCUS		
Illness	Health	
Cure	Prevention, Care, Cure	
CONTENT		
Treatment	Health Promotion	
Episodic Care	Continuous Care	
Specific Problems Mode	Comprehensive Care	
ORGANIZATION		
Physician in solo practice	Multidisciplinary Team	
RESPONSIBILITY		
Health sector responsible	Intersectoral collaboration	
Professional Dominance	Community Participation	
Passive Reception	Joint Responsibility	

4. Some basic beliefs provide the foundation for primary health care. Below, each belief is presented, followed by an example. Provide a second example from your own experience or observation.

a) Individuals, groups and communities participate in health care.

Example: People can work together to protest and seek control of air pollution coming from a local factory.

Example: _____

b) Individuals and groups have the right to affordable and up to date health care services.

Example: Parents have the right to safe and standardized immunizations for their children, provided within their local community.

Example: _____

c) People have the right to accessible care within their community.

Example: An interdisciplinary community health centre is available with extended hours and comprehensive services.

Example: _____

d) Federal/provincial governments work with communities and health care personnel to deliver community based health care services.

Example: Government funding and planning is directed towards new independent living units for seniors at the request of community spokespeople.

Example: _____

e) Health care professionals and the local community work together to provide health care services.

Example: Culturally sensitive prenatal classes are coordinated and scheduled at convenient times within an accessible, local community building.

Example: _____

In Reflection:

1. Reflect on your own knowledge of primary health care nursing. What learning needs do you have to be able to feel comfortable providing this approach to nursing care.
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of primary health care nursing?

References:

CIHI (2003) *Health Care in Canada*, pages 33 - 42. Ottawa.
http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/products/hcic2003_e

Health Canada. (1996). *Population Health Promotion: An Integrated Model of Population Health and Health Promotion*. Ottawa.
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/healthpromotiondevelopment/pube/php/php.htm>

Leddy, S. & Pepper, J.M. (1998). Conceptual bases of professional nursing. Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia. (2002). *Primary Health Care: Position Statement*. Vancouver, BC. <http://www.rnabc.bc.ca/pdf/339.pdf>