

MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH CARE PRACTICE A Handbook for Teachers, Researchers and Health Professionals	
Title	STRATEGY »HEALTH FOR ALL« – NURSING ROLE AND PERSPECTIVE
Module: 4.3	ECTS (suggested): 0.2
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Keywords	strategy, health for all, nursing
Learning objectives	After completing this module students should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be familiar with the importance of the conclusions of Alma Ata Conference on Primary Health Care, Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, Strategy Health for all and Health for all in the 21st century. • know recommendations from WHO and nursing meetings and conferences which topics were Public Health, Health Promotion and Health for all • recognise that the nurses have an important role in public health and health policy development • be familiar with the importance of the role of nurses in prevention of chronic non contagious diseases.
Abstract	Nurses and midwives constitute the majority of the health care workforce in most countries of WHO's European region, and make a significant contribution to health care in a wide range of settings in hospitals and within the primary health care field. We have to motivate nurses, midwives and nursing students to accept the role in the growth of the Public Health, Health Promotion, the Principles of the Health for all and to recognize that health for all and health promotion is something essential for nurses. Recommendations from nursing meetings on these topics should help to do it.
Teaching methods	An introductory lecture gives the students knowledge about Alma Ata Conference on Primary Health Care, Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, Strategy Health for all and Health for all in the 21st century. The theoretical knowledge will be supplemented with students' individual work. First of it they have to read the recommended readings carefully. Afterwards they discuss the importance of thinking about the importance of health for all and how to reach equality in health. In continuation, they need to find published materials (e.g. papers) on health for all (from European region and national legislation and recommendations). Finally they need to prepare seminar work, Power point presentation and poster about risk factors for chronic non contagious diseases.

Specific recommendations for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work under teacher supervision/individual students' work proportion: 30%/70%; • facilities: a class room; • equipment: computer, LCD projection equipment, • training materials: recommended readings or other related readings; • target audience: master degree students according to Bologna scheme.
Assessment of students	Evaluation of their seminar work, Power point presentation and poster about risk factors for chronic non contagious diseases.

STRATEGY »HEALTH FOR ALL« – NURSING ROLE AND PERSPECTIVE

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THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

Good health is a fundamental resource for social and economic development. Higher levels of human development mean that people live longer and enjoy more healthy years of life.

While the health of the 879 million people in the European Region (Region) of the World Health Organization (WHO) has in general improved over time, inequalities between the 52 Member States in this region, and between groups within countries, have widened. In addition to the east–west gap in health, differences in health between socioeconomic groups have increased in many countries (1).

The global burden of disease is shifting from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases and conditions. Over the next 20 years, global deaths from cancer, heart disease and traffic crashes will increase as low and middle-income economies grow, according to the new WHO "World Health Statistics 2008" (2).

Chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, are by far the leading cause of mortality in the world, representing 60% of all deaths. Out of the 35 million people who died from chronic disease in 2005, half were under 70 and half were women (3).

Nurses and midwives constitute the majority of the health care workforce in most countries of WHO's European Region, and make a significant contribution to health care in a wide range of settings in hospitals and within the primary health care field. Nurses and midwives have made some – albeit limited – progress in influencing national health policies or in achieving real recognition as members of the health care team. It is timely to reflect on past achievements and to develop strategies to ensure that nurses and midwives in the future will be in the positions that enable them to influence health care policy and delivery throughout the Region (4).

There is a question how to motivate nurses, midwives and nursing students to accept the growth of the Public Health, Health Promotion, the Principles of the Health for all and to recognize that health for all and health promotion is something essential for nurses.

There are some useful documents such as The Vienna Declaration and some others that can help to convince them that nurses should play a key role in achieving health for all.

The targets Health for all give framework in which nurses can achieve their traditional aims in new, more independent ways, in close collaboration with other health professionals, their clients and communities (5).

Be more freely and more independent, be the part of the successful team are the wishes of everyone so they could be motivators to accept new knowledge and challenges to become a good health promoter.

Historical background of “Health for All” strategy

In 1978, in Alma Ata was a Conference on Primary Health Care. WHO Member States had advocated the development of Primary Health Care as the key strategy for the attainment of health for all.

Primary health care (PHC) is the first level of contact with the national health system for individuals, families and the community, bringing health care as close as possible to where people live and work (14).

PHC includes all services that play a part in health, such as income, housing, education, and environment. It also includes primary care, i.e. the diagnosis and treatment of illness and injury. And it includes the critical elements of health promotion and prevention of illness and injury. One of its greatest strengths is citizen participation in needs identification and service delivery and in bringing these services as close to people as possible (14).

The Conference in Alma Ata strongly reaffirms that health, which is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, is a fundamental human right and that the attainment of the highest possible level of health is a most important world-wide social goal whose realisation requires the action of many other social and economic sectors in addition to the health sector.

For health professionals it is important that PHC relies, at local and referral levels, on health workers, including physicians, nurses, midwives, auxiliaries and community workers as applicable, suitably trained socially and technically to work as a health team and to respond to the expressed health needs of the community (6).

Strategy “Health for All” and important documents concerning nursing

“Health for All 2000”

Thirty-two Member States of the WHO European Region created in 1984 when they adopted the first set of European targets for health, an unprecedented act of solidarity and unity in the health field. The policy's broad health agenda covers lifestyles, the environment and health services, addressing all levels of society and reaching out all partners and sectors that can influence health. It offers not only a vision of where to go for better health and quality of life but also a map showing how to get there. The health policy brought a new philosophy to the health development process in the countries of the Region (7).

The strategy focused on four areas of concern:

- lifestyles and health
- risk factors affecting health and the environment
- the reorientation of the health care system
- the mobilization of political, managerial and technological support to bring about these changes (7).

Health for all 2000 includes 38 targets, organized in three groups.

- The first 12 targets fall into three categories: the basic health for all goals, the health of vulnerable populations and specific health problems.
- Targets 13 to 31 address the changes in lifestyles, the improvements in the environment, and the developments in prevention, treatment and care that will make their achievement possible.

- Targets 33 – 38 address the basic needs that must be met to sound health for all development: the development of knowledge and information support for policy and action; the creation of the requisite managerial infrastructures; the development of human resources for health; the mobilization of resources for health; the mobilization of resources and broad social support; and the advocacy and practice of ethical values (7).

“Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion”

The first International Conference on Health promotion in 1986 in Ottawa gave to world Ottawa charter for Health Promotion, which was adopted as a consensus statement. It set a new direction for health promotion action. The Ottawa charter outlines the five overlapping and interactive means of action that constitute a comprehensive strategy for health promotion: building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills and reorienting health services (8).

“Vienna Declaration”

In Vienna was in 1988 the first WHO European Conference on nursing. There were represented all Member States of the European region.

The Vienna recommendations underline the importance of primary health care, and urge that nursing practice has to be based on the principles underpinning health for all. The recommendations suggest that nursing practice should focus on:

- promoting and maintaining health, and preventing disease;
- involving individuals, families and communities in care and making it possible for them to take more responsibility for their health;
- working actively to reduce inequities in access to health care services and to satisfy the needs of whole populations, especially the underserved;
- extending cooperation between disciplines and sectors of society; and
- ensuring the quality of care and appropriate use of technology (9).

The Vienna Declaration highlights the importance of promoting the active involvement of the community in setting health goals. The focus is shifting away from treating individuals towards building relationships with families and communities, and this is reflected in the targets for health for all. The targets give framework in which nurses can achieve their traditional aims in new, more independent ways, in close collaboration with other health professionals, their clients and communities (5).

“Nursing in Europe”

In 1995 was the meeting of WHO Expert Committee on Nursing Practice. It stressed that the activities undertaken by nurses in all cultures and societies according to the six categories (9).

1. Managing physical and mental health illness status.
2. Monitoring and ensuring the quality of health care practices.
Monitoring and ensuring the quality of health care practices involve such responsibilities as self-monitoring, monitoring the effects of interventions, supervising the work of less skilled personal and consulting with others as appropriate.

3. Organizing and managing the health care system.
This category includes setting priorities with individuals and communities to ensure that multiple needs are met, obtaining specialist services as necessary, coping with staff shortages and maintaining a therapeutic team. It also involves promoting intersectoral work in settings (community clinics, schools).
4. Caring and helping.
Caring and helping involve establishing a climate for healing. Nurses provide comfort to people in distress, support in managing symptoms and help in ensuring the maximum participation of individuals, families and communities in health care planning, treatment and care giving.
5. Teaching about health
Teaching about health is an important function of nursing. Nurses should teach self-care, and guide people in caring for their family members.
6. Nurses must be able to deal with emergencies and crises through the appropriate allocation of resources to meet rapidly changing demands.

The key concept for the future development of nursing is the need to create a nursing role that is appropriate to people's health needs, rather the needs of the health system (10).

“Health 21”

The new strategy, Health 21 – health for all in the 21st century, was accepted in 1998. It has the following main elements:

1. The constant goal is to achieve full health potential for all. There are two main aims:
 - to promote and protect people's health throughout their lives and
 - to reduce the incidence of the main diseases and injuries, and alleviate the suffering they cause;
2. Three basic values form the ethical foundation of Health 21:
 - health as a fundamental human right,
 - equity in health and solidarity between and within all countries and their inhabitants, and
 - participation and accountability of individuals, groups, institutions and communities for continued health development.
3. Four main strategies for action have been chosen to ensure that scientific, economic, social and political sustainability drive the implementation of Health 21 (multisectoral strategies; health-outcome-driven programmes and investments for health development and clinical care; integrated family– and community-oriented primary health care, supported by a flexible and responsive hospital system; and a participatory health development process) (11).

Since the first WHO ministerial conference, held in Vienna over ten years before, little progress had been made towards enabling nurses and midwives to contribute more forcefully to meeting people's needs for health care and public health (13).

“Munich Declaration”

The second WHO Ministerial Conference on Nursing and Midwifery was held in Munich in June 2000. There was universal agreement on the need for strengthening nursing and midwifery at all levels of policy development and implementation, and a Declaration was drafted.

The Munich declaration on Nursing and Midwifery: a Force for Health underlines the key and increasingly important roles of nurses and midwives; urges all relevant authorities to step up actions to strengthen nursing and midwifery; and urges acceptance of the need for supportive steps such as workforce planning, legislative frameworks and development of professional practice (13).

Other important events and documents

The 61st World Health Assembly set WHO on a course to tackle longstanding, new and looming threats to global public health. Among its achievements, the Health Assembly endorsed a six-year action plan to tackle what are the leading threats to human health: non-communicable diseases. Delegates also requested WHO - through a resolution - to intensify its work to curb harmful use of alcohol, which is the fifth leading risk factor for death and disability in the world (2).

In 2008 WHO marks 60 years of service to humanity and 60 years of affiliation with ICN (International Council of Nursing). It also marks 30 years since the goal of universal access to health services through primary health care was enshrined by WHO and member states in the Declaration of Alma Ata, which highlighted the “gross inequality in the health status of the people particularly between developed and developing countries as well as within countries,” To address this, WHO focused on PHC as the key to attaining the goals of its 1977 strategy Health for All by the Year 2000.

In 2008 primary health care is again high on the global health agenda. ICN is celebrating nursing’s leadership and advocating for greater nursing involvement in PHC, the key strategy to achieving universal access and better health for the world’s people (14).

“Health for All” strategy and nursing role today

Today a number of key forces - poverty, increased globalization, climate change, political unrest - affect health and contribute to challenges in service planning and delivery. These challenges shape the environments in which nurses are delivering PHC and include:

- the rising costs of health care;
- increasing consumer expectations and demands;
- changing demographics and ageing populations;
- nursing and other health worker shortages;
- legislation and/or political will to fully utilise nursing’s potential;
- social conflict and unrest which destabilise services and constrain resources;
- natural and manmade disasters;
- endemic and pandemic disease, as well as new and re-emerging ones;
- the surge in chronic diseases;
- making the shift to community based care (14).

Nursing practice is the very essence of primary health care. Their education, experience and the settings where they work make it so. Nurses deliver services wherever people are found: in homes, schools, workplaces, prisons, health and wellness clinics, and other community settings, as well as in hospitals and research centres. In virtually all countries, nurses constitute the largest health care provider group. Nurses are also critical to the training and supervision of other personnel, and to the planning, organisation, monitoring and evaluation of PHC services (14).

Conclusion

Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.

Health promotion strategies are not limited to a specific health problem, nor to a specific set of behaviours. WHO as a whole applies the principles of, and strategies for, health promotion to a variety of population groups, risk factors, diseases, and in various settings. Health promotion and the associated efforts put into education, community development, policy, legislation and regulation, are equally valid for prevention of communicable diseases, injury and violence, and mental problems, as they are for prevention of non communicable diseases (1).

While health promotion is basically activity in the health and social fields, and not a medical service, health professionals – particularly in primary health care – have an important role in nurturing and enabling health promotion (12).

Are the health professionals able to promote health? Do they have knowledge and skills? Are they motivated to do health education and to advocate the promotion of health?

And what about nurses? Are they educated enough to be equal to other health professionals on this field?

Nurses are the principal group of health personnel providing PHC. They foster and maintain links between individuals, families, communities and the rest of the health care system, working both autonomously and collaboratively to prevent disease and disability, and to promote, improve, maintain and restore health. Their work encompasses population health, health promotion, disease prevention, wellness care, first point of contact care and disease management across the lifespan (14).

WHO and some nursing organizations have produced statements that describe a vision for nursing - an ideal picture of how it should be. For example, that WHO Director - General (9) has provided a view of the role of nurses »not just as active providers of care, meeting the professionally defined needs of passive patients, but as facilitators who help people to take charge of their own health«.

This topic is an attempt to give nurses, and other health professionals, information and new knowledge, and to motivate and prepare them to accept the new role with all challenges.

EXERCISES

Task 1

Carefully read the part on theoretical background of this module. Critically discuss the importance of nursing role in public health and health policy development.

Task 2

Discuss with your colleagues about the importance of strategy health for all.

Task 3

Discuss with your colleagues how reach equal possibility to gain positive health for all.

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RECOMMENDED READINGS

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