

Patient Autonomy in Enhancing Health Outcomes

Name

Course

Date

GRADEVALLEY.COM

Patient Autonomy in Enhancing Health Outcomes

Introduction

Interactions between the patient and healthcare provider are critical in ensuring that the patient receives quality care. The patient needs to play an active role in their treatment to facilitate the attainment of a health goal. Health professionals cannot ignore this pivotal role of a patient as well as the society in promoting the health and wellbeing of an individual. The empowerment of patients is as important as their participation in the treatment process. Healthcare providers must adopt a patient-centered treatment plan that ensures that the process has the ultimate goal of meeting the health needs of the individual. Caregivers must also support the self-management of patients through the transfer of knowledge and skills. Health professionals can, therefore, not work in isolation in treating patients. The support of the patient and society facilitates the treatment and attainment of desired health outcomes. As skilled as healthcare providers may be, patients and caregivers can still seek patient autonomy. Patient autonomy and social interactions enhance the quality of care.

Patient Empowerment, Patient Participation, and Patient-Centeredness

A strong relationship exists between patient empowerment, patient participation, and patient-centeredness. These concepts interact to ensure that the patient receives treatment that is most appropriate for their needs. The patient is the most important stakeholder in the treatment process. Various healthcare providers will examine a patient with the goal of providing an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment plan for the patient. The main aim of the process is to successfully treat the individual and enhance the quality of their life. Since the patient is the center of the process, there is a need to educate and involve the individual in designing a treatment plan.

Patient empowerment leads to a high quality of care and life for the patient. Patient empowerment refers to the process of giving the patient control over decisions affecting their health. The patient receives information about their condition and available treatment options for them to assess the most appropriate option. The patient becomes aware of their condition and how to treat and manage the condition during treatment and after their discharge. Knowledge is power; thus, educating the patient increases the chances of seeing better results of treatment. A patient will have control over the decisions that they make on a daily basis, and that may affect their health (Castro, Van Regenmortel, Vanhaecht, Sermeus & Van Hecke, 2016). Empowering patients gives them confidence in the treatment process since they understand the process involved and the expected outcome.

Patient participation contributes to having patient-centered care. Patient participation is the involvement of patients through seeking their opinions, thoughts, and emotions regarding the treatment process. Involving patients ensures that they become active participants in the treatment process. The patient has a platform to air their questions, views, and concerns regarding decisions to be made on their health. In involving the patient, the healthcare provider ensures that the decisions made are in the best interest of the patient. The patient is able to provide information that may assist the caregiver in adjusting the treatment plan to suit the individual's needs and preferences. The active participation of the patient enables the caregiver to make decisions with the interest of the patient in mind.

Patient-centered care ensures the provision of care that is deferential and responsive to the needs, preferences, and values of the patient. This form of care is only possible when there is patient empowerment and involvement. The patient's input is important in pointing out the needs and preferences of the individual. Patient-centered care is personalized care since it is specific to

the needs of an individual patient. Personalized care enhances the quality of care for patients since the caregiver is able to identify the best approach that works for the individual. Every individual has different needs in terms of their health status and lifestyles. Understanding what the patient needs paves the way for the caregiver to have an improved relationship with the patient and work together for the individual's wellbeing. The patient-centered approach considers the patient's lifestyle, value system, and other conditions that affect their daily lives. Consideration of these factors ensures the enhancement of treatment outcomes that last longer.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination is the key to having successful treatment and behavior change needed in maintaining good health. Self-determination relies on the principle of acknowledgment of the patient's autonomy. Patient autonomy is the right to make decisions on one's treatment without coercion, deceit, or even undue influence. The patient can choose to accept, turn down, or put an end to treatment. A patient has the right to choose what happens to their body, including the treatment option that they are most comfortable with. The health professional cannot coerce the individual to accept a certain treatment option if it is inconsistent with their beliefs and value system. The care provider can only support the decisions of the patient by offering alternatives and sufficient information for the patient to make informed decisions. Self-determination gives the patient power, and this power is an asset when the patient has access to the right information.

Patient autonomy affects the patient's access to care. Autonomy means that the patient can decide whether to seek medical attention or not. Patient autonomy and competence go hand in hand while influencing one's relationship to care. Healthcare providers should support patient autonomy while enhancing the competence of these patients. The education of patients is important in enabling individuals to make informed decisions. The patient should understand the

need to seek medical treatment and circumstances when medical attention is critical. Knowledge of the expected outcomes for each decision also enhances decision making. Even when allowing the patient to make autonomous decisions, healthcare professionals still have a duty to explain and educate the patient on their options. Lack of information may lead individuals to turn down treatment options that may have beneficial outcomes. Therefore, autonomy plays a role in determining a patient's access to care.

Continuity of care causes an increment in autonomous motivation among patients. When patients receive care continuously, they become consistent in looking after their health. The consistency enhances their health outcome and, in turn, motivates the patients to become adopt a consistent change in behavior. Continuity in care encourages the patients to become continuously take medication and other measures necessary for the management of their health. Lack of consistency breaks the pattern, and the patient has to relearn the new routine all over again. Autonomous motivation is critical in health management as well as encouraging behavior change necessary for improved health outcomes. Behavior change necessary for desired health outcomes only occurs with the patient's autonomous motivation. The changes in lifestyle for diabetic patients only occur with the patient's motivation to change (Koponen, Simonsen & Suominen, 2017). Disrupting such changes may interfere with the patient's lifestyle leading the patient back to old habits.

Self-management enhances the chances of improved patient outcomes. Supporting self-management enables patients to continuously take medication, change their lifestyles, and take necessary actions necessary to realize desirable health outcomes. With self-management, there are enhanced health outcomes as the patients become actively involved in their health. Provision of education to patients is a major component of self-management as healthcare providers seek to

enhance the knowledge base of individuals. Education covers preventive, curative, treatment, and management interventions. With sufficient education, individuals understand their health condition better and are able to manage the conditions successfully. The health professional also offers other necessary interventions necessary to offer support to patients to assist in the management of health. Therefore, even with self-management, the role of a healthcare provider remains crucial.

Reduced Readmission Rates

Autonomous care reduces the readmission rates of patients after admission. It is prudent to conduct tests on patients to check the readmission rates of patients observing autonomous care and those who do not indicate that patient autonomy is desirable. Multivariable tests taking into account factors associated with patient autonomy indicate that autonomy contributes to a reduction in readmission rates, especially among diabetic patients.

Readmission rates within 30 days after discharge for patients reduced significantly among patients using self-management approaches (Wancata & Hinshaw, 2016). The Difference-in-differences model used in studies related to readmission rates indicates that self-care is critical for patients after discharge. A comparison between effects on a control group and a treatment group reveals the benefits of autonomy (Moore, 2017). The use of a representative sample also helps in eliminating bias and having accurate research results. After discharge, the patient must take up the responsibility of looking after their health since the healthcare professional may be unavailable all the time to take care of the patient. Once the patient takes up this role, it becomes easier to manage the health of the patient after discharge, thus enhancing the health outcome.

Interventions to promote patient-centered care are critical in reducing the rate of readmission within 30 days of discharge. The patient-centered checklist enables the focus to remain on the patient's health to realize desired health outcomes (Hardiman, Reames, McLeod & Regenbogen, 2016). The checklist includes major elements of care and indicates areas of weakness. The healthcare provider and the patient then work on improving the shortcomings to enhance the health outcomes of the patient. The checklist also includes key objectives to enable the healthcare provider to pay attention to the needs of the patient. In focusing on the major objectives, the treatment plan has a better chance of helping and improving health outcomes. With patient-centered care, the caregiver is able to focus on the main areas for the overall wellbeing of the individual.

Independence of care reduces readmission rates due to the increased involvement of the patient. The patient takes control of the routine self-care to ensure the improvement of health. The patient becomes empowered enough to make decisions and take control of the recommended health management techniques (Entwistle, Carter, Cribb & McCaffery, 2016). Trusting the patient to take care of their health is important since the caregiver cannot monitor the patient all the time. Patient motivation is also important to cultivate to ensure that self-management yields expected results. Motivation includes the active involvement of the patient to ensure that they understand every element of self-management. Motivation enables the person to make necessary changes that ensure the improvement of their health. Diabetic patients, for instance, require a change in their diet and overall lifestyle to avoid readmission. Once a patient masters self-management, their health improves, which eliminates the risk of readmission.

The support of patient's self-care is essential through the enhancement of care knowledge and skills. Enhancing knowledge and skills relevant to care ensures that the risk of readmission

reduces. Care knowledge ensures that the patient understands their role in their health management routine. The patient also receives information about their illness and the necessary measures for proper management. The information enables the patient to weigh options and choose one that has the best health outcome. With the right information, the patient becomes sufficiently empowered to manage their health and avoid readmission (Cardarelli et al., 2018). Care skills ensure that the patient can effectively monitor their health and seek medical attention when necessary. Therefore, investing in the patient's knowledge and skills is necessary to lower the risk of readmission.

Patient-Centered Care

Health care systems have the responsibility of ensuring that patients receive the care that they need and when they need it. Effective provision of safe and affordable care is essential so that patients have access to care. Access to quality of care is beneficial to both the patient and the health institution. Healthcare systems can put in measure to augment the quality of care offered to patients (Fix et al., 2018). These measures hold health providers to high-quality standards for the benefit of patients accessing care in health institutions. Through policies, it is possible to ensure that patients receive high-quality care. In offering patient-centered care, health institutions enable individuals to have access to needed care and have a better quality of life.

The relationship between patient-centeredness and patient outcome is crucial and undeniable. Patient-centered care enhances the quality of life for patients. Patient satisfaction also emerges from having patient-centered care. The patient feels valued since their needs and preferences guide the treatment plan adopted by the caregiver. Since the plan is acceptable to the patient, they respond positively to treatment, and a positive outcome follows. The healthcare provider also becomes satisfied and motivated since they observe positive results. This form of

care yields positive results for the stakeholders involved making it an area of interest for health institutions (Lee & Lin, 2010). Improving patient outcomes is a key goal of the healthcare sector, and patient-centered care is the key to achieving this result.

Sociology of Healthcare

Reflexive practices play a major role in shaping patient autonomy for the benefit of the patient's health outcome. The practice involves shaping of one's tastes, preferences, and desires. In this case, the patient successfully shapes their preferences and tastes to fit beneficial practices that yield positive health outcomes. The patient is able to use their autonomy to benefit their health when they welcome changes that shape their lifestyles positively. Having this positive attitude and teachable spirit enables patients to realize the full benefits of their autonomy in improving the quality of their life.

Applied sociology in healthcare highlights the role of social factors in the determination of a patient's health and wellbeing. Healthcare providers cannot ignore the role of these social factors when working with a patient (Earle & Letherby, 2008). Patient involvement enables healthcare providers to learn more about the patient, their family background, culture, and other major social elements. These elements should guide the practitioner in designing a treatment plan that works for the patient. While treating the patient's physical health, the practitioner should also consider the psychological and mental health of the individual, which may affect the overall wellbeing of a patient. With favorable social factors such as family support, a patient experiences a smooth road to recovery with desirable health outcomes.

Learning promotes patient autonomy by imparting the knowledge and skills necessary for patients to manage their health conditions. Teaching and learning methods are instrumental for both patients and healthcare providers. Teaching methods assist healthcare providers in

organizing learning sessions for patients. Learning methods assist patients in acquiring relevant knowledge and skills. The acquisition of knowledge and skills enhances the collaboration of the patient and their caregiver in seeking effective treatment strategies. Healthcare professionals must aspire to become credible sources of information and provide patients with factual information. The information should include research findings that the professional can back with credible sources (Moore, 2017). Patients and their families can confidently rely on the facts when making important decisions concerning their health. Healthcare professionals utilize these teaching and learning methods to offer support to patient autonomy.

Conclusion

Patient autonomy and social interactions enhance the health outcomes of patients. In supporting patient autonomy, healthcare professionals enable patients to make proper decisions concerning their health. Patient empowerment is essential in equipping individuals with relevant knowledge and skills for proper health management. Patient involvement allows the patient to actively participate in the treatment process by airing their views and making inquiries regarding their health condition and its management. Patient-centered care significantly enhances health outcomes since it ensures that the care offered meets the needs, preferences, and values of the patient. Patient-centered care offers satisfaction to both the patient and the healthcare provider. Patient autonomy reduces the readmission rates among patients indicating the improvement of health outcomes. Autonomy relates to self-determination that requires the patient to take control of their health routines. Self-care and motivation contribute towards empowering the patient to make decisions that impact their health outcomes. Since the active role of patients in their treatment is evident, healthcare providers must support their involvement for better outcomes.

References

- Cardarelli, R., Horsley, M., Ray, L., Maggard, N., Schilling, J., Weatherford, S., Feltner, F., Gilliam, K. (2018). Reducing 30-day readmission rates in a high-risk population using a lay-health worker model in Appalachia Kentucky. *Health Education Research*, 33(1), p.73–80.
- Castro, E., Van Regenmortel, T., Vanhaecht, K., Sermeus, W., & Van Hecke, A. (2016). Patient empowerment, patient participation and patient-centeredness in hospital care: A concept analysis based on a literature review. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 99(12), p.1923-1939.
- Earle, S., Letherby, G. (2008). *The Sociology of Healthcare: A Reader for Health Professionals*. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Entwistle, V. A., Carter, S. M., Cribb, A., & McCaffery, K. (2016). Supporting patient autonomy: the importance of clinician-patient relationships. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 25(7), p.741–745.
- Fix, G. M., VanDeusen, C., Bolton, R. E., Hill, J. N., Mueller, N., LaVela, S. L., Bokhour, B. G. (2018). Patient-centered care is a way of doing things: How healthcare employees conceptualize patient-centered care. *Health Expectations: An International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 21(1), p.300–307.
- Hardiman, K., Reames, C., McLeod, M., & Regenbogen, S. (2016). Patient autonomy-centered self-care checklist reduces hospital readmissions after ileostomy creation. *Surgery: Official Journal of the Society of University Surgeons, Central Surgical Association, and the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons*, 160(5), p.1302–1308.

Koponen, A. M., Simonsen, N., & Suominen, S. (2017). Quality of primary health care and autonomous motivation for effective diabetes self-management among patients with type 2 diabetes. *Health Psychology Open*, 4(1), p.1-1.

Lee, Y., & Lin, J. (2010). Do patient autonomy preferences matter? Linking patient-centered care to patient–physician relationships and health outcomes. *Social Science & Medicine*, 71(10), p.1811–1818.

Moore, B. (2017). *Critical Thinking (12th ed)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education

Wancata L. M., Hinshaw, D. B. (2016). Rethinking autonomy: decision making between patient and surgeon in advanced illnesses. *Annals of Translation Medicine*, 4(4), p.77.