BEING AN ADVOCATE

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN NURSING LEADERSHIP
CNF/FNA Leadership Workshop Program

Suva 15th August, FNA Conference Room
15.30HRS
Biblical : 1 John 2:1.

• And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.“

• To speak, plead, or argue in favor of. Support.
BEING AN ADVOCATE

What does it mean to serve as a patient advocate?

(1) Advocacy is defined as "the act or process of ... supporting a cause or proposal."

(2) Patient vulnerability often is the reason one serves as an advocate.
(3) Since the time of Florence Nightingale, nurses have served in this important role, advocating for:

3.1 Health care improvements related to infection control, practice and patient care environments, and access to care.

3.2 Regardless of the practice setting, every encounter a nurse has with a patient provides an opportunity for that nurse to serve as a patient advocate.
Patient Advocate

(4) Nurses generally learn the advocacy role by watching other nurses who provide positive role models by standing up for patients. Through their own experiences, nurses gain confidence in performing the advocate role.
Scenario

Nursing advocacy plays a critical role in keeping patients safe throughout their encounters with the health care system. This is especially true when a patient is undergoing surgery and anesthesia or is too ill or sedated to serve as his or her own advocate.

- A surgical patient was distress when he discovered that bone tissue had been excised during his surgery. The patient had explicitly told his physician not to remove any bone. (1) It is apparent that after the patient was anesthetized, no one served as his advocate. This patient's expressed wishes and written consent were ignored.
WHEN TO ADVOCATE?

A. Clinicians may decide what is best for patients instead of asking or fully considering what the patient might want. This is most likely to occur in situations in which patients choose to rely on and give their complete trust to their health care providers. Other times, patients may be afraid to voice their concerns or preferences.
When to Advocate?

B. Nurses and other health care clinicians must remain alert to times when patients are hesitant or unable to speak up. Encouraging a patient to voice his or her wishes and desires or giving voice to a patient when the patient cannot speak is one of the nurse's most important roles.

C. Nurses should consistently ask the questions, "What does this patient want? What are his or her preferences? What are his or her wishes and values?" This information serves as the foundation for the nurse's role as advocate. A nurse becomes an advocate for a patient by providing care that focuses on meeting the patient's specific wishes.
When to advocate?

D. Nurses also must focus on ensuring that care is provided in the safest manner possible. A nurse serves as an advocate when he or she limits traffic in an operating suite or delays the start of a procedure until the correct instruments are available. Nurses in the perioperative arena play a critical role in monitoring the environment of care, providing safe care, and promoting best practices for infection control prevention.
Advocating for Patients' Family Members

- Nurse allowing 8 year old son in to visit his cancer dying mother
CHALLENGES TO ADVOCATING

• Working in complex systems can make it challenging for nurses to act as advocates. Other clinicians may not listen or respond in a timely manner. There also may be competing priorities for a nurse's attention and efforts, perhaps placing tasks before advocacy.

• BEING WORK FOCUS & NOT PATIENT FOCUS
PATIENT FIRST

• Nurses, however, must consistently place patients' safety first. This may involve having a difficult conversation with a colleague about practice issues or concerns that compromise patient care.

• For example, a nurse may observe that a member of the health care team does not routinely wash his or her hands before touching a patient or after providing patient care. In the OR, a nurse may see a colleague who regularly violates sterile technique or ignores other practice standards. The nurse may need to speak to a surgeon about breaking scrub or contaminating his or her gloves. Practice patterns that place patients at risk must be recognized and addressed.
A CRITICAL ROLE

• When nurses fail to address their concerns or fail to voice a patient's preferences, they miss a critical opportunity to serve as a patient advocate.

• Patients and their family members depend on nurses and other clinicians to detect and address potential safety issues and to protect them from preventable harm.

• Keeping patients safe in the OR and other perioperative settings must remain a high priority, and nurses serving as patient advocates are critical to achieving that goal.
Types of Advocate

Advocate: To speak for...

1. **Nurse: Patients Advocate**

2. **Nurse: Nursing service advocate** (shortage of linen / 1:30 patient – due to ban on overtime)

3. **Nurse: Nursing Profession advocate** (position statement on abortion)

4. **Nurse: Nursing condition advocate** (right to qurts)

5. **Nurse: National/International health / policy advocate** (No Smoking Policy, Seat belts, Condom)
Forms of Advocate

1. To Speak for/ up when patients rights are violated
2. Presents another persons concerns -Mediation / middle man to speak for/on behalf
3. To speak for “equal ground”
4. To speak up “create awareness”
5. To lobby/ activates group : To bring about change/action to policy (person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy)
6. Within the bound of law: Industrial action, March, petition, tie yourself to the anchor of a ship. Tie yourself to a tree (greenest)

It is important that you do not break the law/ widespread looting/rampage of city.
Recommendation

• Have trained activist, Nurses, lobbying group, to:

1. Spread nurses out who are vocal

2. Help quiet timid nurses to “bark”

3. Nurses to create National /Global Health Awareness, sit in health boards

4. Nurses investigate violations of patients rights, maternal child health rights, Family rights and speak up / report

5. Advocate change in attitude, nursing transformation and enforcement of health policies.
REFERENCES


