

Nursing Leadership Role in Pandemic

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17511/ijphr.2021.i02.01>

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A Pandemic is an epidemic of disease that has spread across a large region, multiple continents or worldwide, COVID-19 is a large issue worldwide. A good nurse leader is someone who can inspire others to work together in pursuit of a common goal, such as enhanced patient care. An effective leader has a distinctive set of personal qualities; integrity, courage, initiative and an ability to handle stress, and also taking the effort to think critically, set goals and skilfully communicates and collaborate. Nurse's leaders are faced with a variety of challenges in pandemics, including managing resources, advanced planning and goal setting, collaborating with other hospital and community leaders, improving quality measures, cost-effectiveness, reporting to the board of directors, and many more. Nurses as effective partners of the health care team, of necessity, have to meet the demands of these changes adequately and appropriately in respect of their expanded and enriched roles and responsibilities. Nurse leaders, however, are still confined within their nursing orbit, but, today they have to be visible and interactive members of the multi-disciplinary health team with a vision and voice that can be heard. **Methods:** For the present review article collected a database from Google scholar; search and scrutinize studies related to nurse's leadership role during pandemic and article related to Covid-19 outbreak, government, community effort and mitigation strategies in reducing transmission. **Result:** Because it is a novel pandemic; results suggest that more researches are needed in this field related to driven factors, mitigation strategies and support of governmental and non-governmental organizations. This review article is aimed that nursing leaders must continue to develop plans that can slow or prevent the progress of widespread illnesses and ensures that all client care provided by the team is carried out in keeping with the objectives of the health care organisation.

Keywords: Leadership, Pandemic, Mitigation

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Mamta Verma, Associate Professor, College of Nursing, AIIMS, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India. Email: mamta.gedam@gmail.com	Pakhide V, Verma M. Nursing Leadership Role in Pandemic. Public Health Rev Int J Public Health Res. 2021;8(2):07-12. Available From https://publichealth.medresearch.in/index.php/ijphr/article/view/154	

Manuscript Received 2021-03-02	Review Round 1 2021-03-12	Review Round 2 2021-03-20	Review Round 3	Accepted 2021-03-24
Conflict of Interest No	Funding Nil	Ethical Approval Yes	Plagiarism X-checker 6%	Note



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Introduction

A Pandemic is an epidemic of disease that has spread across a large region, multiple continents or worldwide. A new coronavirus was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei China, in late December 2019 as causing a cluster of cases of acute respiratory disease, referred to as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) [1]. COVID-19 is a large issue worldwide, more than 200 countries and territories have been affected by major outbreaks in the United States, Central China, Italy, Spain and Iran. According to the World health organization the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), named for the crown-like spikes that protrude from its surface, causes a range of respiratory illnesses from the common cold to pneumonia. On 11th March 2020, the World health organization characterized the spread of COVID-19 as pandemic [1]. Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and associated COVID-19 have caused a global emergency that requires an engaged, integrated, interdisciplinary, and rapid response from the scientific community. Climate change, ecological change, and biodiversity loss might have played an important role in the occurrence of this zoonotic pandemic. Climatic and environmental factors, such as temperature, humidity, and air pollution, are potentially influencing the transmission, spread, and severity of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Strong scientific evidence about the contributions of these environmental determinants in the COVID-19 pandemic is needed, in combination with an understanding of the role of other important societal factors and public health interventions. This evidence will support the public health community in responding to the current crisis, and inform strategies to prevent the recurring effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and future emergencies [2]. Nurse leaders must continue to develop plans that can slow or prevent the progress of widespread illnesses. A good nurse leader is someone who can inspire others to work together in pursuit of a common goal, such as enhanced patient care. An effective leader has a distinctive set of personal qualities; integrity, courage, initiative and an ability to handle stress, and also taking the effort to think critically, set goals and skilfully communicates and collaborate [3]. Nurses as effective partners of the health care team, of necessity, have to meet the demands of these changes adequately and appropriately in respect of their expanded and enriched roles and responsibilities.

Nurse leaders, however, are still confined within their nursing orbit, but, today they have to be visible and interactive members of the multi-disciplinary health team with a vision and voice that can be heard [4]. Well organized and prepared health systems can continue to provide equitable access to essential service delivery throughout an emergency and decreasing mortality [5].

According to Jean N. Groft, nurses have always played a vital role in the response to outbreaks of deadly illnesses. The story of Alberta nurses' heroic efforts in the face of the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918-19, in the absence of public health infrastructure, reminds us of the importance of preparedness [6]. The responsibilities of nursing leaders during pandemic include managing staff, preparing a budget, preparing work schedules, writing and implementing policies that guide client care and unit operations, and maintaining the client services [7].

Method

For the present review article collected database from Google scholar; search and scrutinize studies related to nurse's leadership role during pandemic and article related to Covid-19 outbreak, government, community effort and mitigation strategies in reducing transmission.

Aims and Objectives

This review article is aimed that nursing leaders must continue to develop plans that can slow or prevent the progress of widespread illnesses and ensures that all client care provided by the team is carried out in keeping with the objectives of the health care organisation. Objectives are:

- Explain about professional qualities of a nurse leader in a pandemic.
- Discuss the essential skills required for every nurse leader for success and to meet challenges during pandemics.
- Describe the nursing leadership role during pandemics.

As nurses comprise the largest component of the health care workforce, should a disaster occur, it is inevitable that nurses will be caring for those victims and patients. They must be trained and have the knowledge and skills to respond, whether they are caring for someone on the front lines of the disaster or in a hospital.

Mitigating the spread of infectious diseases is so important because one of the main things we want to try to accomplish is reducing patient deaths and slowing the spread of the disease so we can handle the numbers of patients when the surge hits [8].

Nurses are important in managing a health crisis because they are a vital link between the patient and the rest of the health care team. They can determine the human response to the medical problem. Nurses relay their assessment findings to providers, they can determine if a respiratory therapist needs to be called, they can assess the patient's response to medical treatments, and they educate the patients, along with providing a listening ear or a calming touch. [8].

The role of other potential environmental determinants of COVID-19, including air pollution and other environmental pollutants, might become clearer within similar comprehensive epidemiological frameworks. To address this pandemic, we will need to understand its driving factors, which mean systematically observing many aspects of COVID-19 at a global, regional, and community level is necessary. Recommendation about epidemiological studies that consider multi-level investigations of reliable and representative environmental, societal, and population determinants, and use accurate ways to define COVID-19 cases, and study designs that provide robust scientific evidence [2].

Professional Qualities of the nurse leader in pandemics

The nurse leader has to possess certain personal qualities and professional qualities. Personal qualities include such as integrity, honesty, ability to co-operate, willingness to help and assist, self-confidence, courage and expertise to work. Professional qualities are;

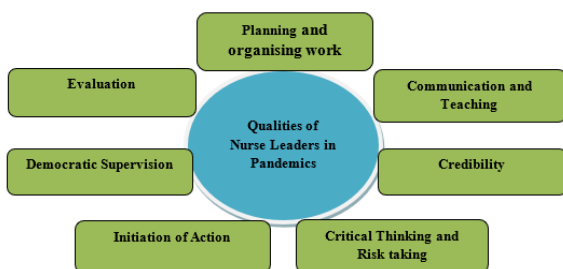


Figure 1: Professional qualities of a nurse leader

- **Planning and organising work-** Planning and organising work according to the availability of personnel and materials, assigning work with clear instructions. Using effective strategies in the management of difficult nursing situations. Resolving conflicts and negotiating conflicts for good working conditions and quality of service rendered.
- **Communication and Teaching-** Communicates assertively and speaks directly and honestly to others, differentiates between aggressive, passive and assertive behaviour to communicate appropriately in a given situation. Good communication is needed for proper understanding, co-operation and unified action. Communicating appropriately with the team and influential member of the health profession for creating an alliance for nursing with them. Teaching and guidance of team members regarding;
- Assessment and prioritising patient care
- Maintaining the highest standard in precautions especially in hygiene practices
- The economy in provision of adequate supplies including personal protective equipment
- Maintaining continuity of services, teaching patient, families and other members of the society with information about health and treatment
- Self-protection strategies
- **Credibility-**Leadership enhances a nurse's responsibilities and accountability.
- **Critical Thinking and Risk-taking-** Uses critical thinking skills in planning and organising activities. Nurse leader has autonomy in decision making, visualising difficulties, taking risks involves acting to manage emergencies.
- **Initiation of Action-** Activates emergency response mechanisms, put ideas into action and demonstrate flexibility.
- **Democratic Supervision-** Supervising the work and mentoring of team members about the risk and how they can protect themselves. Leaders understand how to use power effectively does not dominate but motivates others.
- **Evaluation-** Evaluation of the performance of team members and taking continuous feedback.

This requires robust planning and coordinated action between the government and health facilities.

According to Reem Nassar AL- Dossary, leadership is not merely linked to top management levels, but it can be developed and implemented at the bedside for nurses. Clinical leadership skills focus on patients and health care teams rather than a formal leadership position. Also, clinical leadership relates to nursing professional activities, which provide direct patient care at the bedside, which differs from traditional nursing leadership skills; is crucial for nurses who provide direct patient care. This allows nurses to direct and support patient and health care teams when providing care. Furthermore, nurses must develop an effective leadership role to deliver high-quality care and ensure patient safety while engaging in numerous daily leadership roles [9].

Leadership success

Nurse's leaders are faced with a variety of challenges in pandemics, including managing resources, advanced planning and goal setting, collaborating with other hospital and community leaders, improving quality measures, cost-effectiveness, reporting to the board of directors, and many more.

The three top essential skills required of every nurse leader involve;

01. **Shared decision-making** – It promotes staff autonomy, accountability and engagement. Instead of directing and controlling the decision-making process, the nurse leader coaches, guides, and facilitates.
02. **Relationship management** – Nurse Leaders must be able to manage a relationship with a wide variety of individuals because collaboration and teamwork are required to deliver high-quality patient care. Successful nurse leader encourages the nurse to develop communication skills so they can openly communicate with other multidisciplinary team members, solve problems, and actively participate in patient care decisions.
03. **Social awareness** – Social awareness is another key to the success of any nurse leader. It involves understanding social networks and norms within groups, cultures and networks (any region, community or throughout the world).

Shared decision-making, relationship management, and social awareness are all important to nursing leadership success [10].

Nursing leadership role in pandemics

According to WHO Director – General's opening remarks at the media briefing on the COVID-19 pandemic, the four key areas;

- Prepare and be ready
- Detect, protect and treat
- Reduce transmission
- Innovate and learn

As communities work to reduce the spread of COVID-19, they are also addressing the economic, social, and secondary health consequences of the disease. State, local, tribal, and territorial officials are best positioned to determine the level of mitigation required. Mitigation strategies should be feasible, practical, and acceptable; they should be tailored to the needs of each community and implemented in a manner that minimizes both morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 and does not create or exacerbate any health disparities. The goal of community mitigation in areas with local COVID-19 transmission is to slow its spread and to protect all individuals, especially those at increased risk for severe illness, while minimizing the negative impacts of these strategies. These strategies are used to minimize morbidity and mortality of COVID-19 in societal sectors such as schools, workplaces, and healthcare organizations [11].

Implementation is based on:

- Emphasizing individual responsibility for implementing recommended personal level actions.
- Empowering businesses schools other settings to implement appropriate actions.
- Prioritizing settings that provide critical infrastructure services.
- Minimizing disruptions to daily life to the extent possible and ensuring access to health care and other essential services [11].

According to the CDC guide preventive healthcare strategies are introduced to keep the population as healthy and disease-free as possible, by providing general education (assist in preventive health efforts), identifying at-risk patient, helping facilitate access to care and educating the community.

01. Emphasis on preventive care; preventive care encompasses a wide range of techniques to identify, educates, prevent and treat diseases in the population. Nurses in preventive health care tasked with improving the health of the patients through evidence-based recommendations while encouraging individuals to receive preventive services such as screening and counselling. Implementation of infection control practices to prevent transmission.
02. Facilitate access to the most up-to-date government and related health pandemic information. Increase awareness of the need for the programmes.
03. Lead and manage the nursing team, provide directions that are clear, concise, accurate and complete. Encourage adaptability to changing circumstances.
04. Consultation with the health care team and among health care departments.
05. Serves as a case manager, isolation and identification of cases.
06. Cost-effectively allocate resources, anticipating resource needs, and gather the necessary supplies.
07. Provide a link to all standard guidelines according to new pandemics. Provision of individual conference, group meetings for the team.
08. Compliance in achieving the predetermined standard through quality assurance.
09. Writing reports and maintaining records, document task completion and necessary client data important for legal safeguard, this highlight the magnitude of an illness as a public health problem.
10. Collaborate with governmental officials regarding health care legislation and policymaking. Responsible for updating policies and standing orders.

Nursing care is the greatest investment made in healthcare and accordingly has the greatest impact on patient outcomes. Nurse expertise in infection prevention and control, critical care, palliative care, and public health will constitute the difference between the success and failure of global health systems to hold or collapse, and the preservation or loss of countless lives. Central to all of these roles is our adaptability and our capacity to preserve human dignity and ease suffering.

Nurses see and practice healthcare through a different lens to other health professions and are often described as the linchpin of health systems [12].

The Indian government (central and state level) is working intensely to minimize the number of cases and consequences daily and is taking all necessary steps to combat the challenges and threat posed by this growing invisible pandemic war involving the public, medical association, nurses, NGOs, police forces, including paramilitary. Earnest efforts of all the frontline workers especially medical doctors, nurses, healthcare staff, sanitation workers, police personnel, volunteers, and active support and obedience of the people of India has been the only possible reason owing to the control and treatment of pandemic. Additionally, to treat/stop this COVID-19 infection there is a pressing need to handle this battle at a scientifically advanced level. Indian government got critically involved with the COVID-19 outbreak and started scanning every person [13].

Crises situations exceptionally increase the demand for leaders and make their role much more complex, expansive, and time-sensitive. Decisions must be taken fast despite uncertainties, and new leadership styles may need to be innovated as the older ways may not work. The concept of "leadership-in-crisis" is a constantly evolving paradigm for researchers of leadership. It encompasses several executive tasks bundled together as a comprehensive package, for example, early recognition, sense-making, making critical decisions, orchestrating vertical and horizontal coordination, coupling and decoupling, meaning-making, effective communication, rendering accountability, learning, and enhancing flexibility [14].

Result

Because it is a novel pandemic; results suggest that more researches are needed in this field related to driven factors, mitigation strategies and support of governmental and non-governmental organizations to combat challenges and decreasing mortality rate and slowing the spread of the disease.

Conclusion

A leader is a person that others follow voluntarily and willingly. In nursing, leadership is showing that the followers how things are done, guiding their way, and course of actions.

Additionally, nurses as part of the health intra-disciplinary team must be capable of leading in this era of high patient acuity, fast-paced and highly complex environment. Nursing leadership is about a vision and empowering staff.

Nursing leaders ensures that all client care provided by the team is carried out in keeping with the objectives of the health care organisation. The responsibilities of nursing leaders during pandemic include managing staff, preparing a budget, preparing work schedules, writing and implementing policies that guide client care and unit operations, and maintaining the client services. Nurses as effective partners of the health care team, of necessity, have to meet the demands of these changes adequately and appropriately in respect of their expanded and enriched roles and responsibilities. Nurse leaders, however, are still confined within their nursing orbit, but, today they have to be visible and interactive members of the multi-disciplinary health team with a vision and voice that can be heard.

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