

Long Term Care

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The residents of long term care facilities require competent care so as to enjoy a good quality of life. Long term care facilities provide range of physical and mental conditions for the residents, keeping in view the individual needs of the inmates. A brief review of the growth of long term care facilities may offer some insights into current challenges confronting this care setting.

Definition: Long term care consists of a variety of services which help to meet both the medical and non-medical needs of people with a chronic illness or disability who cannot care for themselves for long period of time.

Growth of Long Term Care Facility

By the end of the 17th century, most European countries had created institutions to care for the mentally ill, aged, developmentally disabled, orphaned, poor, criminals and people with contagious diseases. The intention was not to provide highly specialised and individualised care but rather to segregate these people from the rest of society.

Until 19th century, the United States had few institutions of this kind. People who were sick, old or disabled were expected to receive care at home through private help or family members. As the population grew, there was also increase in number of people without the financial or family resources to be provided care, and hospitals and other forms of in-patient care were needed.

An informal long term care system began to evolve as people rented rooms of their homes to older adults who needed accommodation, board and perhaps some basic personal care assistance. In 1946, the federal development took a noticeable step in promoting nursing home growth through the Hill-Burton Hospital Survey and Construction Act. The Act provided funds for hospital construction, but other institution, such as nursing homes, could also obtain funds if they met certain conditions.

Residents of long term care

Residents of long term care organisations can be of

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any age, although most are older adults. The risk of being in long term care facilities increases with each decade of life, the average age of residents is 82 years.

Staff of long term care facilities

Nearly 1 million nursing employees work in long term care facilities in the United States. However, most of these are unlicensed personnel.

Nursing responsibilities

1. Assessment

To have a comprehensive assessment conducted within the first 14 days of admission and at least annually; to have a comprehensive care plan developed within 7 days after completion of assessment.

2. Care planning

Regulation requires that a care plan be drawn for each resident within 7 days after completion of the assessment. The care plan is an interdisciplinary one.

3. Care giving

The direct care giving role of nurses varies from one facility to another. Residents face many adjustments in terms of Environment, Routine, People, Independence and Communication

4. Management

Nurses hold a variety of administrative and managerial positions in long term care facilities.

Functions of nurse

- ◆ Delegating assignments
- ◆ Supervising other staff
- ◆ Evaluating performance
- ◆ Completing reports
- ◆ Reviewing and auditing records
- ◆ Investigating, reporting and recording incidents and accidents

Kinds of long term care facilities

Within the community, there are many types of

long term care facilities where they may choose to work.

Subacute or transitional care: It is a separate parts of a hospital or nursing home. They receive patients in acute conditions.

Assisted living facility: A form of housing that provides 24 hour staffing, meals, supervision of medications and personnel care facility.

Adult day care, Home care, and Hospice are other areas of care.

For people who are terminally ill and in need of care should be supported in the home or in a day hospital setting.

Holistic nursing in long term care facilities

- Assisting residents in their efforts to promote health and prevent complications.
- Supporting residents to achieve a higher potential of functioning.
- Learning about the unique life stories of residents.
- Helping residents boost their natural healing abilities.

- Providing a nurturing and healing care giving environment.
- Offering opportunities for residents to experience joy and satisfaction.
- Adhering to accepted standard of nursing practice.

Conclusion

The roles and responsibilities of nurses in long term care facilities are varied and complex. Residents possess a wide range of physical and mental conditions that require expert assessment, interventions and monitoring.

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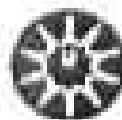
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