We are living in a world where people expect treatment modalities which will result in the most positive outcomes with the least cost in terms of cash, time and sufferings. For the most part, there is a support for the notion that cost effective nursing intervention holds a greater promise in delivering highest standards of care. Thus nursing offers a unique perspective to patient care. This unique perspective of patient care obliges nurses to build their own body of evidence. Ironically, most of nursing body of knowledge is derived from medical and social sciences. So, nurses cannot rely solely on updated medical knowledge, rather have to build their own body of evidence through scientific research.

Despite the acknowledged benefits of research, nurses have not been able to carry on research studies in clinical areas on the same scale as that of other professions. There are numerous factors responsible for delay in research studies related to nursing practice.

- Nursing programmes are less likely to prepare nurses to conduct research at clinical settings.
- More number of post graduates in nursing have limited their role to educational institutions, leaving clinical practice behind.
- In clinical settings, nurses are isolated from knowledgeable colleagues with whom to discuss about research activities.
- Although many research studies were being done, members of the profession are not made aware of such findings.
- The results of research are not reported in terms that can be easily understood by staff nurses.
- Nurses lack knowledge regarding application of research findings in clinical practice.

Lack of peer support, lack of time, limited knowledge and skills of research process are other factors.

Role of Nurse Administrator

Nurse administrators in the present context refers to the nursing head of any health care agency. It can be termed as Director of Nursing/Chief Nursing Officer/Matron/Nursing Superintendent etc. In order to strengthen research in clinical nursing practice, their role is vital. He/she plays a key role in incorporating research findings constantly and knowledgeably into nursing practice. To get this done, first and foremost, nurse administrator should be able to build and co-ordinate complex relationship between research and its application in clinical practice. Here are the few measures he/she can adopt for the same.

1. Proficiency in Nursing Research

Ahead of all others, nurse administrator should have sound background of research and should be interested in supporting research activities. Despite various duties and responsibilities, he/she should be able to reserve some time for research activities. He/she should also have the ability to comprehend and to evaluate research reports available in the current literature.

2. Bringing changes in attitudes

As match stick is needed to ignite fire, nurses need positive attitude towards carrying out research activities. Without a positive attitude, staff members may feel reluctant towards research activities and tend to spread negativity around. Creating a positive attitude and open mindedness among nurses towards research is a challenging task for administrator. The first thing, the administrator needs to be concerned with in this regard is to be aware how research will affect the patient outcomes and improvement in nursing care. Administrator can also keep some incentives for nurses to encourage participation in research activities.

3. Establishment of favourable climate

Nurses are often overburdened by clinical demands on them leaving behind little time to focus on research. The factors contributing include: inadequate

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nursing staff in the unit, increased nurse-patient ratio, etc. In order to direct or to participate in research, staff nurses need financial support; they need reduced working loads and adequate library facilities. To overcome these hurdles and create a conducive environment for carrying out research-related activities, administrator should recruit the staff according to norms, mention about the performance of research activities in their job description, organise in-service education programmes on topics related to research and gain support from management for the same.

4. Funds for research at clinical area
Finance for research is related to the economic development of the institution. Usually hospitals lay less emphasis on research activities in their budget. Moreover, nursing research has least priority among the research budget when compared to research activities in medical field. The hospital administrators should be sensitised so that while preparing the annual budget, they take care of this component.

5. Recruitment of Nurse Educators to direct the research activities
In order to aid the growth of research in clinical nursing practice, administrator must appoint nurse educators who are prepared to direct the nursing research activities in respective clinical areas. Policies should be laid down to recruit nursing post graduates as nurse educators. Key roles of nurse educators related to research include encouraging staff to become acquainted with research, research methods and updating their knowledge on nursing research, guiding the nurses on various aspects of research like, identifying the problems, writing research proposal, writing application for ethical committee, making observations, collecting and recording data and performing other necessary tasks.

6. Establishment of Journal Clubs
The administrator should take initiative in establishing Journal Clubs in their hospital. If the hospital has many departments, then every nursing department can have separate Journal Clubs in order to stay abreast of research in concerned speciality areas. The group should discuss and critically evaluate the recent researches conducted in nursing and allied health fields that are relevant to nursing. The administrator should act as facilitator for Journal Club and should play active role in selecting the research articles for discussion, moderating the discussion, encouraging group inputs, evaluating the session and scheduling the next session. In case, there are many journal clubs within the institution, administrator can delegate this responsibility to nurse educators, while being coordinator for all journal clubs.

7. Encouraging staff participation
It is the responsibility of the administrator to identify staff nurses with potential for conducting nursing research. Encouragement, together with appropriate training, development and support must be provided for them. The working load of such staff needs to be reduced, so that they can do justice to research activities. Administrator should take effort to sensitise other staff about value of research in nursing, in order to gain their support. Research activities should be encouraged at various levels, as a routine part of job.

8. Application of research findings
Many of the research findings do not come into force due to lack of application in practical settings. The application of research findings is important to conduct research itself. Some research findings will help eliminate nursing actions that do not achieve desired outcomes. The other findings help nurses identify the practices that alter health care outcomes. The administrator assumes leadership role in transforming the findings into practical environment in order to improve the patient care and to plan the activities of the nursing unit. The administrator also utilises the research findings to influence the hospital management to bring changes in policies/protocols related to nursing services.

9. Utilisation of research findings to stimulate further research in Clinical Nursing
Research findings often have implications for nursing practice that stimulate further study in respective area. For example, various studies have been done on effectiveness of change of position on reducing discomfort after coronary angiography. Based on these findings, administrator can encourage staff in cardiac unit to conduct similar studies on other Catheter-based interventions through femoral approach like percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA), temporary femoral pacing etc. She can also encourage staff nurses to conduct research on effectiveness of other measures to reduce discomfort in such patients.
10. Establishing supportive policies

Policies need to be established on such issues as portion of time a staff nurse should devote to research and on patient care, the amount of funds that are devoted to research needs, selection of research guides (nursing and non-nursing personnel), research collaboration with other disciplines. Administrator should convince the management regarding the importance of these and bring necessary changes in existing polices and thus facilitate research in clinical setting.

Conclusion

Although research has made a significant contribution to the body of nursing since then, yet it has little impact on clinical nursing practice. We need many supporting hands for strengthening research in clinical practice. Nurse administrator and heads of the teaching institutions play a vital role in this calculation. So does the administrative support and finance.

References

13. http://www.searo.who.int/en/Section523/Section5310/Section5343/Section544/Section5505241.htm

Nominations Invited for Princess Srinagarindra Award

For attention of all State / UT Branch Presidents / Secretaries and Members of the Council TNAI

We have received a letter on February 18, 2015 from Dr. Tassana Boontong, Secretary-General, The Trustee of the Princess Srinagarindra Award Foundation under the Royal Patronage, Thailand, regarding announcement of the Princess Srinagarindra Award for the year 2015 to commemorate the Centenary Birthday Anniversary of Her Royal Highness Princess Srinagarindra Mahidol.

An individual registered nurse and/or registered midwife or group of registered nurses and/or registered midwives can be nominated by National nursing authorities or by individual or group of individuals as candidate for the Award. Any individual or group of individuals can sponsor only one nomination. The same person may be re-nominated.

The eligibility criteria and selection procedure including the nomination / application form & other details can be downloaded (from the link: http://www.princess-srinagarindraaward.org/content/news52.html). Duly filled forms should be submitted to TNAI latest by 15 April 2015 positively for further action.

Application form and guidelines are also available on TNAI’s website. The same will be published in TNAI Bulletin.

Sheila Seda
Secretary-General