

Contribution of Nurses towards 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'

Munira Bashir

Health is man's birth right. To obtain this birth right, every individual needs fresh air and sunlight, balanced diet, regular exercise, rest and sleep, mental relaxation, good habits, and clean internal and external environment. According to WHO, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing. A person who enjoys health at these three dimensions is said to be in a state of "positive health". The attainment of positive health is one of the important ingredients of good life that a nation should assure for every citizen. India has launched many campaigns and programmes to enhance healthy citizens.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a national campaign to have Clean and Healthy India. It includes all the measures to be adopted by Indian public to assure healthy Indian citizens. Everyone is directly or indirectly involved to maintain and promote one's health. All health team members provide health care at primary, secondary and tertiary care settings. Nurses form major component of health team to provide incidental and planned health care to their clients. Besides giving direct care, they adopt preventive measures, counsel a client, a family on matters pertaining to health.

Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi launched a campaign, **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** on 2 October 2014 to fulfil Mahatma Gandhi's vision of "Clean India". He invited many public figures to this national campaign. In this campaign, the focus was on cleaning of environment.

To achieve the goal of clean and healthy India, nurses play vital role to provide comprehensive health care to individuals (sick or well), families and community at large. While providing care, she aims at prevention of disease, promotion and restoration of health. Enormous changes have occurred in the delivery of nursing care to the clients. Nursing entails the nurse meeting the client's needs whatever the situation. They are with clients more frequently than other health professionals.

Nursing play vital role in improving health at primary, secondary and tertiary level in following ways:

Provide safe environment and safeguard a client in health care setting: Health and quality of life are greatly affected by the influence of the environment. Disease is the consequence of the interaction of mind

and body with the environment. Healthy environment fosters healthy and happy people. Nurses can educate the clients and significant others: waste segregation and make public aware about use of different colour dustbins; damp dusting in all health centres; noise free and well ventilated environment (which enhances client's recovery); proper lighting in the wards and wash rooms in order to avoid falls; repair of any cracks in walls and floors to get rid of rodents; keeping the client's lockers clean, dry and lined, use of naphthalene balls to protect from moths and cockroaches; clean water supply in the wards; use bedrails for small children, elderly, unconscious, comatose post-operative and other critically ill clients; using hot water bag cautiously for small children, elderly, comatose and other clients with loss of sensation; keeping drugs and chemicals away from client zone under lock and key; providing right drug and right dose to right client at right time. Avoiding slippery floor by getting it dry mopped; checking for any loose switches and electric connections; checking the hospital equipment for any defect and getting it repaired; checking wheel chair, trolley and client beds for movable condition.

Avoid cross infection: Transmission of infection can be prevented by following measures: Making hand washing mandatory for all health team members, to be performed before and after touching a client or when entering a client zone, touching any client equipment, performing any procedure, when exposed to client's body fluids. Hands can be washed with soap and water. While washing, rub hands vigorously together to cover all surfaces, rinse with water and dry with clean towel. Else sanitizer can be used for cleaning hands by health team members and clients and their attendants; cutting short nails because long nails give roof to dirt and microorganisms; isolating infectious cases. This zone should have limited en-

The author is Associate Professor, MM Institute of Nursing Sciences and Research, SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar (J&K).

try of visitors. Health care workers entering this zone must follow barrier nursing technique; cleaning the isolation unit daily with disinfectants like phenyl or savlon; following the principles of surgical asepsis by keeping sterile equipment above table or waste level and keep these dry. Avoid sweeping and dusting when sterile field is on.

Meeting the nutritional requirement of a client: Encouraging clients to wash hands before and after meals; checking that the meals provided to the clients is clean and as advised.

Provide health education: With the increased focus on prevention, promotion and independence in self-care activities, today's health care system mandates the education of consumers to a greater extent than ever before. Health education is concerned with establishing or inducing changes in personal and group attitudes and behaviour that promote healthier living. Nurse educates a client, family or community people on following grounds:

Nutrition: The nurse guides people to choose optimum and balanced diets which contain nutrients necessary for energy in recovering clients, growth of muscles and repair of tissues in injured and post-operative clients; encourages intake of balanced diet by children, pregnant women, lactating women and elderly people; uses visual aids in simple language which focuses on various food groups and their sources; encourages intake of supplements like iron, folic acid, calcium etc. She guides on precautionary measures to be followed while taking supplements.

Hygiene & Immunisation: She guides and teaches on the aspects of personal and environmental hygiene, including bathing, clothing, cleaning of teeth, hands, feet, cutting short nails and toilet training; environmental hygiene includes domestic hygiene, use of soap and water, need for fresh air, light and ventilation, hygienic storage of food, hygienic disposal of waste, need to avoid pests, rodents and insects. She gives health teaching during pre-natal and post-natal period about various vaccinations necessary for safeguarding pregnancy and prevention of diseases in children.

Use of health services: She informs the public about the health services that are available in the community and how to use these services, and encourages people to participate in various national health programmes designed to prevent disease and promote health.

Follow up: Clients and their relatives require lot of information once the client is discharged from hospital. Essential information regarding home care, follow up need to be informed by nurses.

Through health education, hospitals and other health care institutions can contribute to important health care goals such as improved quality of client care, better utilization of out-patient or community health care services, fewer admissions and readmissions to hospitals, shorter length of stay, fewer complications from treatments and reduced health care costs.

Florence Nightingale once said that nurses can do more good in home than in the hospital. Public health nurses, health visitors and health inspectors are visiting hundreds of homes; they have plenty of opportunities for individual health teaching. Today lot of research is being done to evaluate the effectiveness of planned teaching programmes, use of prepared health modules, use of audio-visual material on knowledge, skill and attitude of people towards health aspects and these are found very effective in health set ups, communities, schools etc. in improving their health outcome.

Thus nurses can prove as clinicians, general practitioners, advocates and counsellors for their clients. They are an asset to improve health of an individual. They have multipurpose roles not only in hospital but in community, in schools, in industries and can fulfil aim of Prime Minister's campaign of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. We are really going to have healthy and clean India, if we feel client's feeling, if we possess soft heart and give care with our gentle hands.

References

1. Bastable Susan B. Nurse as educator. Principles of Teaching and Learning for Nursing Practice, 2nd edn, Boston: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2003
2. Pearce Evelyn. A General Text Book of Nursing, 20th edn, New Delhi: JP Brothers, 1989
3. Bashir Munira. Legal aspects in nursing care. Ed: Tabish, Syed Amin. Evidence Based Nursing Care -Standard Operating Procedures. Practice Guidelines, SKIMS, 2012
4. Sr Nancy. Stephanies Principles and Practice of Nursing, Vol I and II, 6th edn, Indore: NR Brothers, 2008
5. Anderson E. The Role of Nurse. Study of Nursing Care. Series Two. Royal College of Nursing, London, 1972
6. Redman BK. The Process of Patient Teaching in Nursing, 3rd edn, St Louis: CV Mosby Co, 1976
7. Roper N. Principles of Nursing, 2nd edn, Edinburg: Churchill Livingstone, 1973
8. Timby Barbara K. Fundamental Nursing Skills and Concepts, 9th edn, Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer, 2009
9. Balint E, Norell JS. Six Minutes for the Patient Interaction in General Practice Consultation. Tavistock Publications, London, 1973
10. Khuroo MS. Hand Hygiene and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. *Greater Kashmir* (News paper), 27 Nov, 2014