

Extended Role of a Pediatric Nurse

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ABSTRACT

Nurses play a major role in the health care team, they have various roles such as nurse clinician, nurse practitioner, nurse researcher, and nurse administrator which are all expanded roles of nurses, in this article we will see about the extended role of a nurse. There are various extended roles such as Ostomy, chemotherapeutic, neutropenic, intravenous therapy, CART or Resuscitation nurse, pain nurse, lactation nurse, etc.

Lactation Nurse: Pediatric Nursing Department

INTRODUCTION

The department of Child health has been handling children of all age groups, including newborns. The number of newborns and infants being admitted has exponentially increased over the years. There are around 55 deliveries per week. There are newborns admitted to the wards as well as visiting the Outpatient department with illnesses. The spectrum of cases coming to the OPD is failure to thrive, feeding problems, and electrolyte disturbances due to lack of breastfeeding by mothers.

Need For a Lactation Nurse:

Breastfeeding provides numerous health benefits to both the mother and the infant, and also to the nation's overall public health. Breastfeeding education, promotion, and supporting interventions are crucial in helping mothers increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. Some of the reasons the mother may choose not to breastfeed her infant or determine to discontinue breastfeeding earlier than recommended include a variety of personal and societal reasons such as sore nipples, infant's difficulty latching, and perceptions that they were not producing enough milk to satisfy their infants. Societal barriers such as working outside the home, length of maternity leave, and embarrassment of breastfeeding in a public.

A lactation nurse is the need of the hour in enabling, supporting, and promoting the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding. Her primary duty would be to provide high-quality, appropriate extensive consultations on how to best manage their practice of breastfeeding their babies. For mothers to become knowledgeable about what may happen when they start breastfeeding, it is vital that they receive proper informative information regarding breastfeeding. Health care providers sometimes fail to provide information on the benefits of breastfeeding over formula feeding. Breastfeeding initiation and maintenance benefit

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from the skills and assistance of a supportive experienced individual. A professional lactation consultant nurse works collaboratively with the other primary care providers. To assure appropriate practical management of breastfeeding and lactation in order to protect promote and support breastfeeding, education and counseling are to be given to prevent and solve breastfeeding problems.

At present we only have 1 lactation nurse who takes care of the maternity and pediatric nursing department. We are facing more and more mothers who have breastfeeding problems and around 10 to 12 per week have problems in the ward in relation to breastfeeding, and a recent study among breastfeeding mothers showed that the practice of mothers on exclusive breastfeeding was very poor and only 18% had good practice due to lack of support and other personal and societal reasons mentioned above. This gap in practice could be fulfilled with a lactation nurse consultant who would help and support in the promotion of breastfeeding.

Description of A Lactation Nurse:

A lactation nurse is a nurse that specializes in the clinical management of lactation and breastfeeding. A Lactation nurse is specialized in training mothers on how to breastfeed their babies. The lactation nurse will provide the majority of breastfeeding education during the postpartum period. A lactation nurse will provide breastfeeding support, assists with lactation care, and educates patients to overcome obstacles and concerns with breastfeeding.

A lactation nurse will work in different settings like outpatient clinics, general and private wards, and high-risk infant clinics. A lactation nurse usually works during the day shift, but that may vary depending on where they work.

A lactation nurse is skilled in caring for patients who are experiencing breastfeeding issues like painful nursing, decreased milk production, latching difficulties, and babies with low weight gain. She works closely with the patient to understand how to latch their baby to the breast, the various breastfeeding positions, and how to tell if a baby is transferring and drinking enough milk. She will be familiar with breast pumping equipment that assists babies who are unable to transfer milk or moms who must return to work or be separated from their children. She will also give mothers breast milk storage tips, tips for how to deal with painful and cracked nipples, and how to make sure their baby is getting enough milk.

Lactation nurse will be familiar with chronic and acute conditions and if there are any implications with breastfeeding a newborn baby. A lactation nurse can make or break the difference in a breastfeeding relationship

between mom and baby. They are compassionate, patient, and empowering.

Education Requirements

A Registered Nurse (RN), with specialized training on lactation and management of breastfeeding problems

JOB DESCRIPTION

Clinical management of breastfeeding:

- Assess breastfeeding sessions including the newborn's latch, milk transfer, and position.
- Assess newborn for adequate milk intake, appropriate weight gain, and jaundice.
- Educate the patient about breastfeeding techniques, breast pumping methods, and breast milk storage.
- Educate patient about baby feeding cues, normal stools, and feeding concerns.
- Assist with troubleshooting for painful latch or nipples, poor milk transfer, or breast refusal.
- Provide referrals for babies with poor weight gain, observed tongue and lip tie, and any medical newborn conditions.
- Provide breastfeeding support, encouragement, and care for postpartum patients.
- Educate mom how to record newborn feeding schedule and wet and dirty diapers.

Collaborative services:

- Attend rounds with the health team members and identify mothers who have problems with breastfeeding.
- Educate and liason with all pediatric health care providers. Make daily rounds to assess all the breastfeeding mothers in the pediatric wards.
- Inculcate and foster professional ethics and values in the working environment.
- Apply scientific principles in providing care to the mother and child.
- Maintain safe and therapeutic environment, for the child and families.
- Maintain standard of the nursing care at the highest level.
- Maintain effective liason with senior nursing staff and medical staff.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills.
- Provide ongoing support and advice whenever necessary.

Staff Education:

- Assessing the staff knowledge on assessment and clinical management of mothers with breastfeeding problems.
- Training the junior staff to manage mothers with breastfeeding problems.
- Evaluating the outcome of the given teaching by assessing the practice of mothers.

CONCLUSION

The lactation nurse plays a crucial role in promoting lactation in mothers, studies have shown that breast milk increases immunity in infants and prevents or minimizes infection in them. Even it helps in the intellectual ability development in infants. The lactational nurse has a major role in promoting the well-being of both the mother and the infant.