

Assessment of Nurses' Role in Supporting Hospitalized Children and Their Accompanying Mothers

Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of Master Degree in
Nursing Sciences
(Pediatric Nursing)

By

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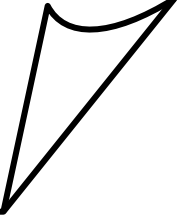
*First and foremost, I feel always indebted to **Allah**, who always help and care for me, the most kind and the most merciful.*

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Content	page number
List of tables -----	I
List of figures -----	iv
Abstract -----	vi
Introduction and aim of the study -----	1-5
Review of literature -----	6-65
Part I : Hospitalization of children:	
Definition and causes of hospitalization -----	6
Children's attitudes toward hospitalization and health care professionals -----	7
Children's stressors related to their hospitalization	8
• Separation anxiety-----	9
• Loss of control-----	13
• Bodily injury -----	17
Factors affecting children's reaction to hospitalization	22
Coping of the children toward their hospitalization-----	24
Stressors and reaction of the family towards hospitalization of their children -----	26
Part II: Nursing role in supporting the hospitalized children -----	
A. Aspects of nursing care in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers -----	29-58
• The physical aspects-----	29

Content	page number
• The psychological aspects -----	38
• The social aspects-----	47
• The teaching aspects-----	53
B. Implementation of nursing process in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers-----	58-65
• Assessment -----	60
• Nursing diagnosis -----	61
• Planning -----	62
• Implementation -----	62
• Evaluation -----	64
Subjects and methods-----	66
Results-----	75
Discussion-----	105
Conclusion and Recommendations-----	122
Summary-----	125
References -----	134
Appendices -----	
Arabic summary-----	

List of tables / Result

<i>Table No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
1	Distribution of the studied nurses in relation to their characteristics	56
2	Distribution of the studied nurses in relation to their place of work	77
3	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children in relation to their characteristics	79
4	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children in relation to their diagnosis, duration of disease and hospitalization	82
5	the physical effects of hospitalization on the studied children	83
6	of the psychological effect of hospitalization on the studied children	85
7	the social effects of hospitalization on the studied children	86
8	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children according to sources of their stressors during hospitalization	78
9	Distribution of the studied children according to factors affecting their reaction toward hospitalization	88
10	Distribution of the studied nurses' knowledge regarding their role as an administrator and decision maker in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mother	91
11	Distribution of the studied nurses' knowledge regarding their role as a care provider in supporting the hospitalized children	92

List of tables / Result

12	Distribution of the studied nurses regarding their role in supporting the hospitalized children during procedures and pain management.	93
13	Distribution of the studied nurses' knowledge regarding their role as a discharger and an educator in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers.	94
14	Distribution of the studied nurses according to their total knowledge regarding their role in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers	95
15	The relation between the studied nurses' age and their total knowledge in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers	96
16	The relation between the studied nurses' years of experience and their total knowledge in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers	97
17	The relation between the studied nurses' qualification and their total knowledge in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers	98
18	The relation between the studied nurses' attendance of training program and their total knowledge in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers	99
19	The relation between the characteristics of the studied hospitalized children and their depression level	100
20	The relation between the depression level of the studied hospitalized children and their duration of hospital stay	101

List of tables / Result

21	the relation between the characteristics of the studied hospitalized children and their anxiety level	102
22	The relation between the anxiety level of the studied hospitalized children and their duration of hospital stay	103

List of figures (result)

<i>Figure No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page</i>
1	Distribution of the studied nurses according to their qualification	76
2	Distribution of the studied nurses in relation to their attendance of training program	78
3	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children according to their gender	80
4	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children according to their birth order	81
5	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children in relation to their anxiety level	89
6	Distribution of the studied hospitalized children in relation to their depression level	90

ABSTRACT

The present study is a descriptive study that aimed to assess the nursing role in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers. A convenient sample that consisted of 70 hospitalized children at inpatient pediatric department and 90 nurses recruited from the inpatient department affiliated to Ain Shams University hospital, Cairo university hospital and Om El-Atebaa hospital. Data were collected through an interview with the hospitalized children, their accompanying mothers and nurses, using a structured questionnaire sheet. Anxiety and Depression scales were used to assess the psychological state of the hospitalized children. The results of this study revealed that, more than half of the studied nurses (51.11 %) aged 25: \leq 30 years and had Diploma of Nursing School. less than half of the studied children aged from 6: $<$ 9 and more than half of them were boys. There was a statistical significant difference (SSD) between the total nurses' knowledge in supporting the hospitalized children and their ages. Regarding the factors affecting the studied children's reaction toward hospitalization it was found that, the majority of both of them reported; the shortage of nursing staff. It was concluded that, the majority of the studied nurses supported the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers through explaining the roles and policies of the hospital, assessing mothers to share in medical decisions related to their hospitalized children's condition, designing schedule for the daily habits of the hospitalized children and preparing the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers about any procedure of care. Shortage of nursing staff was the main factor which affecting their reaction toward hospitalization of children and their accompanying mothers. It was recommended that, the staffing ratios must be carefully evaluated, since these ratios must be considered in the care of pediatric patients and their families.

Key words: role, support, hospitalization, pediatric, nursing



Introduction

Hospitalization is stressful for children of all ages and their families whether it is elective, planned in advance, or the result of an emergency or trauma. Illness and hospitalization are the first crisis that children may face (*James et al., 2007*). Children are frequently hospitalized at an unknown environment surrounded by strange people, equipment and frightening sights and sounds. The hospitalized children are subjected to unfamiliar procedures, some of which are invasive and may even have surgery or be in an intensive care unit where the children's routines are disrupted and normal coping strategies are tested (*Esepezel & Canam, 2008*).

Illness and injury threatens both the physical and psychological development of children. Sickness causes pain, restrain of movement, long sleepless periods, restriction of feeds, separation from parents and home environment which may result in emotional trauma (*Ashwill et al., 2008*). Hospitalization and prolonged illness can retard growth and development and cause adverse reactions in the child (*Melynck, 2007*).

Children's dealing with the stress of hospitalization will be negatively or positively influenced by multiple factors



(*Kristensson, Elander, 2008 & Meleynk, 2009*). Those factors are related to the child's age, emotional and psychological predispositions, previous hospital experience, the amount and type of information the child possesses and parent's reaction. Other factors include child temperament, seriousness of the child's condition, reasons and length of hospitalization, coping abilities of the child, the type and amount of pre-hospital preparation, hospital system, environment, policy and services provided (*Jones, 2004*).

Disease and hospitalization of children affect all family members and alters the whole family dynamics (*Herron, 2005*). The child's family suffers stress for a number of reasons: the cause of the illness, its treatment, guilt about the illness, past experiences of illness and hospitalization, disruption in family life, the threats to the child's long term state of health, cultural or religious influences, coping methods within the family and the financial impact of the hospitalization all may affect how the family responds to the child's illness (*Burke et al., 2006*). However, to minimize the stress of hospitalization, the nurses need to provide support to children and their families before, during and after hospitalization (*Britton & Johnston, 2007*).



Nurses work during hospitalization collaboratively with the children and their parents through using various strategies that promote coping and adaptation. Nurses are instrumental in ensuring that the developmental and educational needs of children are met, especially when hospitalization is prolonged. Nurses also work with families to prepare for discharge or transfer to a long term care or rehabilitation facility (*James et al., 2007*).

Nursing strategies should be done to prepare children and their families for the hospital experience, these strategies include assessment of verbal and nonverbal behaviors then validating the information with accurate interpretation and providing appropriate responses and intervention, so the hospital stay may be as a pleasant experiences as possible (*Kyle & Scott, 2008*).

Significant of the study:

The pediatric nurse is very important in the health care team, as with whom the child become in frequent contact and permanent dealing. During hospitalization the child is exposed to different types of stressors including; the hospital environment itself, parental and family separation, pain and invasive procedures,



loss of control and interacting with strangers. So, if the relation or the interaction between the child and the nurse takes the negative track, this sure will act as big stressors that can hinder the continuity of care provided and also lead to a negative impact on child health. Therefor it is important to conduct this study to shed light on the nurses' role in supporting the hospitalized children and their accompanying mothers.