

Learning Needs of Nurses in Transition into Community Nursing



Muhsin MG¹, Hassan N², Xi WV³ & Goh YSS³

1Community Nursing, Changi General Hospital, 2 Nursing Education & Research, Changi General Hospital, 3 Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies, National University of Singapore

BACKGROUND

As community healthcare programmes expand, the expectations of nurses carrying out the programmes in the community increased accordingly. Several studies have identified the unique challenges faced by the growing responsibilities of nurses practising in the community. However, there were fewer studies that focused on the educational needs and nursing skill sets that are required for community nurses to function competently in a community setting. Amongst those literature, there is an inadequate amount of research conducted within the local context.

Purpose

- Gain insight into the educational needs of nurses through exploring their transitional experiences into community nursing.
- Contribute to the body of knowledge which a Community Nursing Programme could be developed to smoothen a nurse's transition into community nursing.

METHOD

Design: Qualitative research design

Participants: 14 community nurses in Singapore of varying gender, ethnicity, age, working experience and nursing specialty

Data Collection: In-depth semi-structured interviews conducted from Sept 2018 - Dec 2018.

Data Analysis: Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in verbatim. Thematic analysis approach was conducted.

DISCUSSION

The transition experience of each individual nurses highlighted commonalities such as the struggle in adapting to the different dynamics of nursing practice in the community despite being an experienced nurse. Through the interviews, the nurses indicated that multiple in-services and courses were made for them at different timepoints as there were no formal transition programme in place. They described how guidance from preceptors, and support from fellow colleagues and the organization helped smoothen their transition into becoming a community nurse.

The findings of this study accentuates the findings of several other studies, indicating the initial struggles of nurses with previous experience, transitioning into community nursing. The findings also complements other studies on the positive effect of preceptor guidance and organizational support in the outcome of a nurse's transition into community nursing.

FINDINGS I: EXPERIENTIAL THEMES

The common transition experiences of 14 nurses converged, where three major themes and nine subthemes emerged, illustrated below in Figure 1.

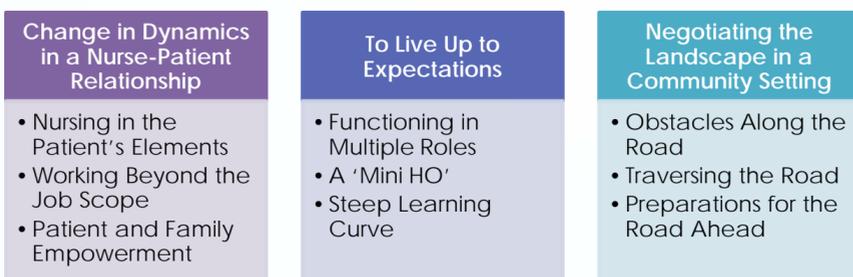


Figure 1. Experiential Themes

FINDINGS II: EDUCATIONAL THEMES

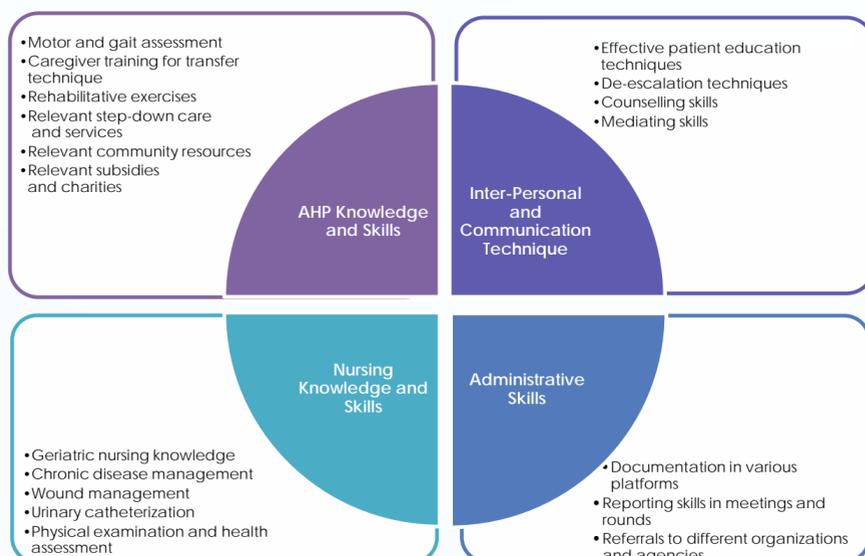


Figure 2. Educational Themes

In the third theme, **Negotiating the Landscape in a Community Setting**, nurses identified the common obstacles faced while in transition and how they adapted and overcame their difficulties. The nurses described the essential knowledge a community nurse must possess in order to carry out their responsibility competently. A common set of learning needs were identified, as illustrated below in Figure 2.

IMPLICATION

Inadvertently, the findings draw attention to the development of a transition programme customized to the needs of a community nurse, which could positively impact a nurse's transition into community nursing. The recommendations of this study are focused into three aspects, namely 'Nurses', 'Preceptors', and 'Organization'. The recommendations of the study are illustrated in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3. Recommendations for Community Nurses' Learning Needs

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ORGANISER



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