



Impaired Nurses

Name

Institutional Affiliation

Date

Our clinical question was based on the topic of impaired nurses. Impaired nurses are the ones who provide patient care while they are impaired by the drugs or due to addiction. Most of the people believe that the nurses are immune from addiction since they are educated, and they are the ones who provide health care to the patients at the hospital. However, the nurses always handle drugs and since they are familiar with the medications, they may develop a substance use disorder. Recently, substance abuse has become one of the major factors that is threatening safe nursing practices. Substance abuse can have numerous consequences on the health of the nurse and the delivery of the duty of the nurse to the patients.

Substance use disorder is characterized by the use of chemicals, even though one is aware of the adverse effects of the chemicals. The compulsive use cycle may have periods where the use is controlled, but it is normally followed by at least one episode of the out – of control use, which may lead to adverse effects on the health of an individual (Kathy & Stephanie, 2011). If the condition is left untreated, substance abuse disorder can risk the life of a person and also the safety of the patients. In our paper, we are going to focus on the causes of the rising number of impaired nurses and the ways through which the nurses can be helped to access help that will enable them to do away with the problem.

As a way of finding the rising number of impaired nurses, we had to look at the statistics that are associated with drug and substance abuse. The statistics will help us to understand the consequences that are associated with impaired nurses. According to a report that was released in the year 2014 by the Kentucky Medical Examiner, an increasing number of accidents that were the cause of the rising number of death cases. Out of the total number of deaths that were caused by accidents, 59.29% were drug related. Of the total number of drug-related deaths, 77.86% were accidental (Smith, 2014). The statistics also showed that the nurses were also affected by drug

substance abuse. The nurses also buy into the myth that they should be able to handle their substance use disorder, since they are health care providers at the various levels. However, it is good also to learn that what can be seen as a burden to another person can become a lighter load when it is shared with someone else. We identified The Kentucky Alternative Recovery Effort (KARE) as one of the nursing programs that is offered by the Kentucky Board of Nursing (KBN) (Smith, 2014). The purpose of KARE is to identify and assist the nurses who are affected by the substance use disorder in the delivery of their nursing care duties so that they may be helped to return to competent and safe nursing practice. In answering the above question, we also went further to identify and read the various books on the topic.

In our research, we identified a common term that is used to refer substance to the condition. The term that we identified is 'impaired nurses.' Impaired nurses is a common term that is used to refer to the nurses whose delivery of proper nursing care is compromised by drug and substance abuse. By using the two words, we were able to gain access to information that is available on the internet about the condition. One of the books that we identified are the ones that are guidebooks to impaired nursing practice in nursing and the interventions that can be taken. The book has been written and published by Massachusetts Nurses Association. Another book is called Substance Uses Disorder in Nursing published by the National Council of State of Boards Nursing. The above sources contained a detailed approach to the topic which was of great benefit to us. We were able to understand various issues surrounding the topic even though they were not relevant to our research.

After collecting the above sources, we went further to identify the ones that answer our question in more direct manner. The causes of drug and substance abuse among the nurses and how they can be avoided. We had to look for two articles that would address the topic in a clear

manner. One of the articles that were chosen was dealing on how to address the chemically dependent colleagues. It was found in the Journal of Nursing Regulation. It is written by Kathy Bettinard- Angels and Stephanie Bologeorges. Another article was discussing KARE as Nursing Program and its significance.

Impaired nurses are found in the society, and it is upon the affected nurses to seek the appropriate medical care. The first step towards handling the problem is for the nurses to admit that there is a problem and then after they have admitted, it would be easier to handle the problem.

References

Kathy, B.-A., & Stephanie, B. (2011, July). Addressing Chemically Dependent Colleagues.

Journal of Nursing Regulation.

Smith, P. (2014). What is the KARE for Nursing Program? *KBN Connection, Edition 39*(No. 14).