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## Soft skills for Nurses; a need of an hour

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### ABSTRACT

*The nursing profession of India has come a long way but still there is a lack of competence in healthcare due to lack of soft skills among Nursing professionals. As a value addition, developing soft skills cater strong team building, strengthening personal expertise which can facilitate better patient care and healthy ecosystem. **Objective:** This study focusses upon the values of soft skills for nurses to perform high since they work under pressurised and stressful environment at the hospital. It emphasizes the obligations of the nurses to bring wellness to the patients since they touch upon their lives both physically and psychologically.*

**Keywords:** Nursing education, soft skills, hard skills, competence, patient care.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Evolution of Nursing Education in India:

India has been witnessing Nursing care and service since ancient times, where the informal way of Nursing was performed by the women in families and communities which was relied upon natural herbs and practices. But the formal Nursing education was initiated by East India Company with first nursing school that is The School of Nursing at the General Hospital in Madras was established in 1867. Currently Indian Nursing Council which was established by the government of India in 1916 has been an apex regulator of nursing education and practice in the country.

Keeping innovations and developments in the field of health care sector in mind, INC has come up with an integrated syllabus which encompasses both core nursing subjects like community health care, mental wellness, clinical skills, anatomy etc and soft skills and communication to increase the competence of nursing professionals.

#### What are Soft Skills?

Soft Skills are personality attributes and qualities that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with others. Certainly, Soft skills supplement clinical skills or postings and lead to

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improved patient care outcomes in Nursing. If Hard Skills like patient assessment and medicine management qualifies a person to become a Nurse, Soft Skills help them to establish themselves in the industry and work competitively at the workplace. There is no doubt in one climbing the career ladder swiftly and reach his or her goal by inculcating Soft Skills along with hard skills.

Soft skills play an enormous role in one's longevity and success in nursing career. Nurses have to be essentially competent, and they must know how to connect to patients for the better response to the treatment and health outcomes. How strong or poor one's soft skills depend on analytical thinking, empathy, and etiquettes he or she has carried while communicating with others at workplace. Apparently, a nurse should have a consolidated hard knowledge with adequate soft skills in order to fulfil the need of his or her profession.

**Below listed are the significant soft skills for the nurses:**

- **Interpersonal Skills**

As a service provider Nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well and in all settings. Clear interpretation of the message between a doctor and the patient smoothens the examination and consultation process.

**Verbal Communication**

Nurses with strong verbal communication must know how to speak clearly and precisely during critical and complex situations. A lag in communication can mislead patients who are already distressed and impatient. Hence it is prerequisite to have a command over both oral and written form of communication.

**Non -Verbal Communication**

It is a communication through one's body language and environment referred to all external stimulations other than spoken or written words that include facial expressions, eye contact, physical appearance etc. Non -Verbal communication conveys empathy and compassionate caring especially during critical conditions like paralysis, dysphasia or any severe illness.

- **Language Skills**

A nurse should have a profound knowledge on the language he or she chooses while communicating with the patient. It is important to use clearly without many errors or complexities in the sentences while delivering the message. The use of jargon should be avoided as it has potential to increase patient's anxiety.

- **Teamwork and collaboration**

It is the ability to work with others and help others in a group to attain the full potential and achieve the common goal of that group. Teamwork in nursing means patient -centred approach focused on shared goals. Effective teamwork has been identified as a key contributor to patients' safety and collaboration in providing comprehensive care.

- **Critical Thinking**

Nurses must think critically and solve the problem without much dragging to ensure the safety and well-being of the patients. They should gather information, analyse it before practicing. Evidence -based clinical approach is most optimal in-patient care.

- **Time Management**

Juggling with day and night shifts exhaust the energy of nurses. Prioritising tasks with to do list, cluster care and acting proactively can help nurses to execute their duties in the face of time constraints. Hence its crucial to manage time for better performance.

- **Empathy**

Being compassionate and kind to the patients is an integral part of treatment for the better cure. A nurse is required to understand the feelings and pains of the patients as a powerful tool to bring smiles on the suffering faces.

- **Adaptability**

It's very unlikely to expect cool and constant environments always at the health centre. Nurses should be ready and equipped at the time of eradicating epidemics or on the occurrence of new disease etc. Hence adaptability is very crucial to supress hostile situations.

- **Emotional Resilience**

Working for longer hours without breaks certainly demand emotional aspect of a health care professionals. So, nurses need to develop emotional resilience to cope up with stress and work pressure to maintain their personal health and well-being.

- **Cultural awareness**

Having a cultural competence and respecting other cultures while serving the humanity help nurses provide sensitive care to culturally diversified patient population. It can also encourage the patients to feel home at the hospital which can lead to cope up well with the on ongoing treatment and medication.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study throws light on how soft skills enable novice General Nursing and Midwifery Students and B Sc Nursing students to transform themselves as professionals. Having those soft skills can help transition of personal, social and professional skills of amateur nurses into professionals in their daily duty.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, nurturing and developing these soft skills can ensure professional growth and enhances one's over all personality in reaching his or her aim. Nevertheless, it's truly accomplishing to include soft skills as a part of nursing curriculum.

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