

Ophthalmic Nursing in Specialized Healthcare

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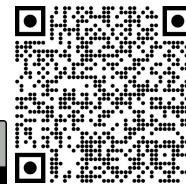
In health care settings, due to advancement in technologies, the expectations from every individual have increased over the last few years. Advance nursing educational programs & trainings are developing competency of nurses in every specialized area. Consequently the nurses need to enhance practical skills to meet the expectations of the patient. Nurses have upgraded standard of nursing care both in community health & hospital-based health care settings.

Specialized ophthalmic nurse plays significant role regarding promotion of eye health, preventive & curative treatment of eye disease as well as for low vision services & rehabilitation. In challenging situation to meet the growing needs of ophthalmic profession, modern ophthalmic nurse is frequently encountered with expectations to deal more patients, more swiftly by using specialized ophthalmic skills & new technology to meet the goals regarding eye health and wellbeing of the patients. This advanced specialized skill enables ophthalmic nurses to expand their practices in different areas of ophthalmic care. Nurses are more vigilant to deal emergencies especially in areas where the resources are minimum and burden of patients. In tertiary eye hospitals nurses perform administrative duties very efficiently as well as clinical duties. An ophthalmic nurse can assess visually impaired patient.¹ They also helps to meet the psychological or spiritual needs of the patient. They can educate and counsel patient which plays a significant role in increasing the awareness of

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visually impaired.^{2,3}

In order to ensure that nurses could perform their duties in an effective manner, they are likely to require special training. At the very least, they need to understand the basic functions of the eye and learn rudimentary information and knowledge about ocular diseases and complications. Training should be arranged and programmed for nurses to enable them manage trauma cases. The ophthalmic nurse also guides the patients to adapt new untiring lifestyle/altering environment after surgeries. Therefore, it is necessary for nurses to maintain highest standard of care by focusing themselves to continued learning. It is responsibility of the organization & program developers to facilitate them.⁴ Competency framework based upon knowledge, ability and interventions have been developed by international organizations that help to improve the career success of ophthalmic nurse. This framework describes three different levels of clinical nurse: Level 1 (competent nurse), Level 2 (an experienced nurse), and Level 3 (senior practitioner or expert nurse). This structure is helpful for ophthalmic care professionals to establish standards for professional progression in the field of visual rehabilitation services.

The ophthalmic nurse responsibilities are to assist ophthalmologist in evaluating, diagnosing, treating and discharging of the patients with ocular disorders. Ophthalmic nurses could perform some pre-evaluation for patients who are candidates for

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surgeries in order to assist the healthcare systems post-surgical satisfaction rate. In addition, their services would be beneficial in helping to accelerate how quickly patients are discharged from hospital, which would result in less drain on financial resources in medical centers. In addition to preparing the patient for surgery, ophthalmic nurse also assists in managing children with ocular disorders.²⁻⁵

In ophthalmic health care settings nurses play a major role. Different studies show a positive correlation between patient care quality & competency of nurse.⁶ Ophthalmic nurse also play a vital role in promoting cost-effective healthcare which is of high priority to both private and governmental organizations. It upgrades the nurse-patient trust relationship which raises the standard of healthcare system. It is concluded that seminars and workshops are important to develop competent ophthalmic nurse and beneficial for health care settings.⁶

The aim of the "Ophthalmic Nursing Specialization programme" is to produce nurses who can apply a multidisciplinary approach in nursing practice through an integrated educational degree. This programme is intended to foster critical thinking, knowledge-based actions, and personal as well as professional development among the nurses, in order to enable them to implement their knowledge and skills with the ever-changing context of health care.

College of ophthalmology and allied vision sciences is offering one year ophthalmic nursing specialization diploma since 2009, and 295 students have passed till now.

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