



THE ROLE OF NURSES IN IMPROVING HEALTH LITERACY

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Annotation: This article scientifically analyzes the importance of nurses' activities in the process of improving health literacy among the population. Health literacy is one of the key factors ensuring the strengthening of health, prevention of diseases, and effective use of quality medical care. The article substantiates how the preventive, educational, and health-promoting activities carried out by nurses improve public awareness about health, change behavioral habits, and support the formation of a healthy lifestyle. Modern approaches and the possibilities of using digital resources in improving health literacy are also discussed.

Keywords: health literacy, nurse, prevention, healthy lifestyle, sanitation-education, health.

INTRODUCTION

Today, strengthening public health, preventing diseases, and promoting a healthy lifestyle are among the priority directions of state policy. Particularly, low levels of health literacy in the healthcare system lead to serious problems such as late detection of diseases, inappropriate self-treatment, and underuse of preventive examinations. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health literacy as “the ability to understand, evaluate, and effectively use health-related information to make decisions regarding one's health.”

Nurses play an essential role, along with physicians, in improving the population's health literacy. As key participants in health promotion, prevention, and education processes, nurses spend the most time directly communicating with the population—explaining, advising, and teaching. This article provides a scientific analysis of nurses' responsibilities in improving health literacy, their practical role, and the effectiveness of educational methods.

MAIN PART

1. The concept of health literacy and its significance for public health

Health literacy is an integral component of modern healthcare. Its main indicators include:

- ability to independently monitor one's health
- rational and correct use of medications
- knowledge of preventive measures
- early recognition of disease symptoms
- timely seeking of medical care
- adherence to a healthy lifestyle



Low levels of health literacy contribute to an increase in chronic diseases, early development of complications, and higher demand for emergency services. Therefore, many countries prioritize sanitation-outreach activities and health-promotion initiatives carried out by nurses.

2. The main directions of nurses' activities in improving health literacy

2.1. Teaching the population a healthy lifestyle

Nurses regularly provide explanations and practical training in the following areas:

- proper nutrition
- physical activity
- hygiene rules
- avoiding harmful habits
- stress management

The aim of this activity is to reduce behavioral factors that negatively affect health and to establish healthy habits.

2.2. Prevention and disease control

Nurses actively participate in all stages of prevention:

- vaccination education
- sanitation and hygiene rules
- prevention of infectious diseases
- work with pregnant women
- protection of child health
- epidemiological monitoring

Their continuous communication with the population increases the effectiveness of preventive measures.

2.3. Sanitation-educational activities

Main forms of health education include:

- lectures and discussions
- brochures, booklets, and banners
- small-group trainings



- educational sessions in schools, kindergartens, and enterprises
- social media videos and infographics
- door-to-door awareness campaigns

Nurses deliver important medical information in simple, understandable, and practical ways.

3. Modern approaches and new opportunities for nurses in improving health literacy

3.1. Digital technologies

Today nurses actively use:

- online consultations
- mobile health applications
- telemedicine
- social media educational posts
- interactive wellness lessons

Digital technologies have become one of the most effective tools for increasing public awareness.

3.2. Innovative teaching methods

- role-playing
- interactive training
- simulation-based teaching
- group discussions
- practical skills sessions

These methods help the population learn medical knowledge more quickly.

3.3. Development of nurses' professional competencies

Nurses involved in improving health literacy must possess:

- pedagogical skills
- ability to prepare teaching materials
- strong communication skills
- psychological approach
- cultural sensitivity



- ability to use modern ICT tools

Continuous professional development of nurses has a direct impact on public health literacy.

CONCLUSION

Improving health literacy is one of the most important factors in enhancing public health culture, preventing diseases, and ensuring effective use of healthcare services. In this process, nurses hold a unique place as the closest, most trusted, and most practical healthcare professionals. Their health-promotion, preventive, educational, and sanitation-outreach activities improve public health, encourage healthy lifestyle adoption, help prevent early disease onset, and increase the quality of medical services. The use of modern digital technologies further enhances the efficiency of this process.

Thus, the role of nurses in improving health literacy is of decisive importance today, and supporting their work remains a priority of healthcare development.

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