

HOSPITALIZED CHILD AND PARENTAL STRESS – PREDICTION OF CHALLENGES

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INTRODUCTION

Parental stress is defined as parental perceptions of a disparity between the demands of childrearing and available resources, is one of the many factors that contribute to the success of parenting. Although the best preventive and promotive health care available, some children develop sick and need hospitalization.

Hospitalized child is a child admitted in the Hospital with acute or chronic illness. Parents and child both may undergo psychological distress when Hospitalization occurs. Especially, parents may experience stress when their child is hospitalized for the first time, which can destructively affect the child's outcome. The crisis of childhood illness and hospitalization affects every member of the nuclear family.

Often illness and hospitalization are the first crises, children must face. The sick children are unlike from sick adult. Hospitalized child must be cared by the professional nurses following principles of disease process and nursing process with appropriate therapeutic and nursing process. Parents have to have trusting relationship with nurses and health team members and approval for expression of feelings and emotions in the hospital environment. Important stressors of hospitalization include: separation anxiety, fear, bodily injury, pain, etc.

TYPES OF FACTORS AFFECTING IN THE REACTION OF PARENTS

- Seriousness of the threat to the child
- Previous experience with illness or hospitalization
- Medical procedures involved in diagnosis and treatment

- Available support systems
- Personal ego strengths
- Previous coping abilities
- Cultural and religious beliefs
- Communication patterns among family members

And to cope up with the stress, develop positive relationship with the children and parents, provide psychological and emotional support in the time of stress; also provide family-centred care with different approach.

EVIDENCES RELATED TO PARENTAL STRESS AND CHILD HOSPITALIZATION

Research evidences are flooded with the outcomes of child hospitalization and parental stress. The results are widely accepted by health care providers and parents.

The study on parent coping support interventions during acute pediatric hospitalization conducted by Stephanie K. Et al. (2016) revealed that the most commonly measured outcomes were parent depression, anxiety and stress symptoms. In the study results by meta-analysis conducted shown combined intervention effects significantly reduced parent anxiety and stress but not the depression.

Mutual relationship and acquisition parent's trust toward nurses, giving the required information and provide health education to the parents about care and treatment aspects were the findings of similar study conducted by Parvaneh Vasli and Mahvash Salsali, (2014), They analyzed the fact in three phases: 1) theoretical phase 2) fieldwork, 3) and combination of theoretical phase and fieldwork. Based on the results of theoretical, fieldwork, and analytical phases, the best definitions for the concept of parents' participation in taking care of hospitalized children were generalized.

ROLE OF NURSE IN REDUCING PARENTAL STRESS DURING HOSPITALIZATION

- Nurse should explain about the child's status, severity of disease condition to the parents.
- Nurse should encourage the parents in child care.
- Nurse should explain about the merits and demerits of the treatment.

- Provide psychological and emotional support to the parents.
- The nurse may help parent to feel more secure and calm in the hospital.
- Nurse should assess the behavior of children and their parents to understand feeling of their behavior reflects.
- The nurse also shares information about the children and their parents, so they can understand the behavior.
- Therapeutic touch will bring the caring attitude to the children and to parents.

CONCLUSION

Parents are experiencing substantial stress and anxiety when their child is hospitalised due to any acute or chronic illness. Coping mechanisms are necessary to overcome with the stress of parents when their child gets admitted in the hospital for the first time. A child's hospitalization is a source of anxiety, depression and stress for parents. And as we all know that physical and mental health is interconnected. Commonly the parents having: Anxiety, depression and stress. So, we have to overcome with the stress for that prepare the child as well as parents for the hospitalization: Supporting family members, Providing adequate information, encouraging parent participation in child care, preparing the parents for discharge and home care.

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