

The Role of the Paediatric Nurse in Discharge Planning: A Systematic Review

Subasinghe S.P.K.J.[#], Pathiranage A.M.S.D.

Department of Nursing, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

[#] *Corresponding author: kalpanasubasinghe1116@gmail.com*

Background: Effective discharge planning can minimize the unnecessary utilization of healthcare facilities. Paediatric discharge planning is a complex process and nurses need lengthy preparations. Role confusion among nurses will disrupt the smooth discharge. In Sri Lanka, although there is a possibility of reducing health costs through effective discharge planning led by paediatric nurses, it is questionable whether Sri Lankan nurses have defined their role in the discharge planning process. Therefore, exploring the available scientific evidence on the topic is in utmost need.

Objective: To map different roles of nurses in the paediatric discharge planning process

Methods: This is a systematic review which was done with electronic databases; PubMed and CINAHL. They were searched for peer-reviewed journal articles among the paediatric population from 2005-2019, using the keywords; discharge planning, paediatric nurse, care transitions, transitional care, and Sri Lankan nurse. Additional websites were explored to find literature in Sri Lanka. Articles resulted in the word combination 'Discharge planning and paediatric nursing (n = 329) were used for screening. Duplicates were removed (n = 13). Two hundred and forty articles that are out of the nursing scope and sixty articles that do not describe a clear nursing involvement in the discharge process were excluded, based on abstract review and full-text review respectively.

Results: Sixteen studies were included in the final review. No literature was found on the topic among Sri Lankan paediatric population. Four main categories of nurses' roles were identified with the thematic analysis namely 'discharge educator, discharge collaborator, post-discharge care coordinator and family counselor'.

Conclusions: In Sri Lanka, no such defined roles of a nurse have been established yet in the discharge planning of paediatric patients. These roles may help nurses to carry out discharge planning effectively, and future studies are needed on this topic in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Discharge planning, Nurses' role, Paediatric nurse, Sri Lanka*