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Patient Adherence: A Concept Analysis

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Purpose: The concept of adherence has become widely used in medical literature as a determinant of patient health outcomes. Patient adherence has been linked to improved patient outcomes and reduced disease progression. However, the concept of adherence is complex in nature (i.e. comorbidities, factors influencing individual behaviors, long-term treatment) and presents challenges to provide a clear definition that will be applicable to every patient. The purpose of this concept analysis is to examine the concept of adherence and explore its' use in the empirical literature.

Methods: The concept adherence was examined using Rogers' Evolutionary Concept Analysis method that identified attributes, surrogate and related terms, antecedents, and consequences of adherence based on findings from the existing literature. A model case using a clinic scenario further analyzed this concept. An electronic literature search was conducted using PubMed, CINAHL, ProQuest Central, and PsychInfo databases to identify relevant articles on patient adherence using the following keywords: "Adherence", "treatment plan," "patient", "therapy" and "prescribed".

Results: Fifteen studies were used for this concept analysis. Overall, adherence is defined as an individual's behavior to follow a prescribed treatment plan recommended by a healthcare provider. Compliance is often used as a surrogate and related term to adherence. Five attributes emerged from the literature: Individual health behavior, behavioral adaptation, agreement, consistency, and commitment. Ten antecedents of adherence were identified: Potential for or actual presence of a disease; prescribed medical treatment or provider recommendation; patient-provider communication; perceived risk and severity of disease or benefit of treatment; motivation; self-efficacy; lifestyle changes; health literacy; care coordination; and access to care. Consequences of adherence include improved health outcomes, reduced healthcare costs, effective prescribed treatment, and reduced morbidity and mortality resulting in fewer hospitalizations.

Conclusion: The current literature dominantly focused on adherence in respect to secondary and tertiary prevention (i.e. medication regimen in treating existing diseases) with limited research in primary prevention (i.e. completing immunizations, smoking cessation, increasing physical activity, etc.). Further, many studies did not consider cultural factors, lifestyle, behaviors, and environmental factors (i.e. community infrastructure to support safe physical activity) that may influence patient adherence. Lastly, adherence is currently measured by health outcomes determined largely by healthcare providers. Future research may consider focusing on differences in patient adherence according to outcomes that matter most for patients. Future research should also consider exploring patients' behaviors in preventative care to improve overall health outcomes through disease prevention and how individuals' behaviors and lifestyle conditions impact their ability to adhere to prescribed treatment plans.

Title:

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Keywords:

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References:

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Abstract Summary:

Participants will explore how the concept of adherence is defined and used throughout the medical literature. Attributes, related terms, antecedents, and consequences of adherence will also be identified. Exploration of future research on adherence will also be discussed.

Content Outline:

I. Introduction

A. Background of the use of adherence in the literature

B. Need for evolution of concept for today's patient with complex health problems.

C. Purpose statement

II. Body

A. Main Point #1 Related terms of adherence

1. Supporting point #1 Compliance

a) Discuss similarities of the concepts of adherence and compliance.

b) Discuss differences between the concepts of adherence and compliance.

2. Supporting point #2 Health maintenance

a) Discuss similarities of the concepts adherence and health maintenance.

b) Discuss differences between the concepts of adherence and health maintenance.

B. Main Point #2 Describe attributes

1. Supporting point #1 Individual health behavior

a) Discuss the concept of individual health behavior as a characteristic of adherence.

2. Supporting point #2 Behavioral adaptation

a) Discuss the concept of behavior adaptation as a characteristic of adherence.

3. Supporting point #3 Agreement

a) Discuss the concept of agreement as a characteristic of adherence.

4. Supporting point #4 Consistency

a) Discuss the concept of consistency as a characteristic of adherence.

5. Supporting point #5 Commitment

a) Discuss the concept of commitment as a characteristic of adherence.

C. Main point #3 Describe antecedents

1. Supporting point #1 Identify ten antecedents that emerged from the literature of adherence.

a) Describe how each antecedent influences adherence.

D. Main point #4 Consequences

1. Supporting point #1 Describe consequences of adherence.

a) Identify and discuss 5 consequences of adherence.

E. Main point #5 Model Case

1. Supporting point #1 Present a model case to demonstrate the concept of adherence.

a) The model case will include the five attributes, ten antecedents, and five consequences identified in the concept analysis.

III. Conclusion

- A. Highlight the identified gaps in the adherence literature based on the concept analysis.
- B. Discuss areas for future research on adherence.

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Professional Experience: I am a second year PhD student at Duke University where I have undergone 2 years of research training in preparation of becoming a nurse researcher. My training thus far pertaining to this education activity has included conducting literature searches for relevant course work and assisting in faculty projects that require me to search the literature for pertinent studies for their projects.

Author Summary: Lisa Mansfield earned her BSN from Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) in 2012. In May 2016, she earned a MSN in Nursing Education and was also a Bridge to the Doctorate scholar. She completed a master's thesis using secondary data analysis to examine the association between parental HPV knowledge, awareness, and their intentions to vaccinate their daughters. She continues her work in HPV research with an interest in exploring factors influencing HPV vaccine completion among adolescents.