

Unconventional Nursing: Exploring Non-traditional Nursing Roles

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Author Notes

The author wrote this advocacy manuscript to inspire all nurses of diverse backgrounds and specialties to explore non-traditional roles in the profession conducive to impacting the global community positively. No research, affiliations, or conflicts of interest are associated with this article and all correspondence to Monica Jaramillo. MonicaJaramilloDNP@Gmail.com

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The impact of the nursing profession on global society and public health is as significant as the various roles and settings in which nurses can perform. Nurses typically engage with health and wellness advocacy at the community level or inside intensive care and other units of hospitals, outpatient services, education, and leadership. Unfortunately, the evident and worrisome international nursing shortage continues to be a global issue of great concern that no authorities have been able to solve despite many efforts (Van der Heijden et al., 2019). Additionally, artificial intelligence (AI) is creating a new wave of change for nurses in which they need to quickly adapt to advanced technologies that significantly modify healthcare practices (Robert, 2019). Accordingly, there is a need to start exploring and collaborating to expand unconventional roles for nurses to ensure the presence of nursing staff in all areas of the community that need caring and empathetic services. It is time to join the effort and start professional collaborations to help mitigate the nursing shortage and transition to integrate new technologies and robotics with ease while promoting innovative and creative nursing roles. The sections of this concise advocacy article include a definition of unconventional nursing, examples of non-traditional nursing roles, and conclusions with recommendations.

Definition of Unconventional Nursing

Nursing is an empathetic profession constantly expanding and evolving, with many opportunities beyond the clinical and academic settings. Non-traditional nursing and unconventional experiences drive innovation and improvement of services in health care (Blake et al., 2020; Firouzkouhi et al., 2021; Noles et al., 2019). From Nursing Assistants to Licensed Vocational Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Advanced Practice Professionals, all expertise levels have conventional and unconventional roles to explore. Besides the commonly known functions

at the bedside, outpatient clinics, leadership offices, management settings, and education, there are other nursing roles not so typical and worth exploring amid the current issues with nursing shortages worldwide. This next session seeks to open the discussion regarding innovative ways to promote and facilitate non-traditional nursing positions that may appeal to some individuals looking to serve others but do not wish to engage in any of the traditional routes. This advocacy could assist with the current shortage and the need to improve health care while advancing along with new emerging technologies.

Examples of Non-traditional Nursing Roles

Non-traditional experiences for nurses can vary from innovative clinical encounters to disaster management and evidence-based leadership (Blake et al., 2020; Firouzkouhi et al., 2021; Noles et al., 2019). Other examples of non-traditional career paths for nurses, depending on their level of expertise and educational backgrounds, include nurse researchers, subject-matter experts, tutors, mentors, health coaches, healthcare sales representatives, recruiters, hospice, consultants, case managers, and legal nurses. In addition to these roles, nurses can also select to work in different environments, such as cruise ships, remotely from their homes, or travel to areas needing nurses with the credentials and expertise they possess. These non-traditional nursing roles can be part of the nursing practice both in patient care and the nonclinical milieu. It is vital to start discussing these unconventional career choices while promoting dialogue and collaborations concerning innovative roles for future generations that may not be considering nursing or may be leaving the profession after a service period for more appealing domains. It is imperative to create more innovative and attractive options for diverse individuals to join the efforts of the caring and holistic nursing profession while improving health care for all communities across the globe.

Conclusions With Recommendations

While health care and technology continue to expand and evolve, so is the nursing profession. The international nursing shortage continues to aggravate, which signifies the need for more prominent efforts to mitigate this issue. Non-traditional nursing roles are worth exploring and disseminating but also could represent a more appealing option for individuals who do not wish to engage in the traditional routes of either clinical or academic settings. This manuscript hopes to inspire dialogue and collaboration regarding new and revolutionary nursing career paths conducive to improving global public health and wellness.

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