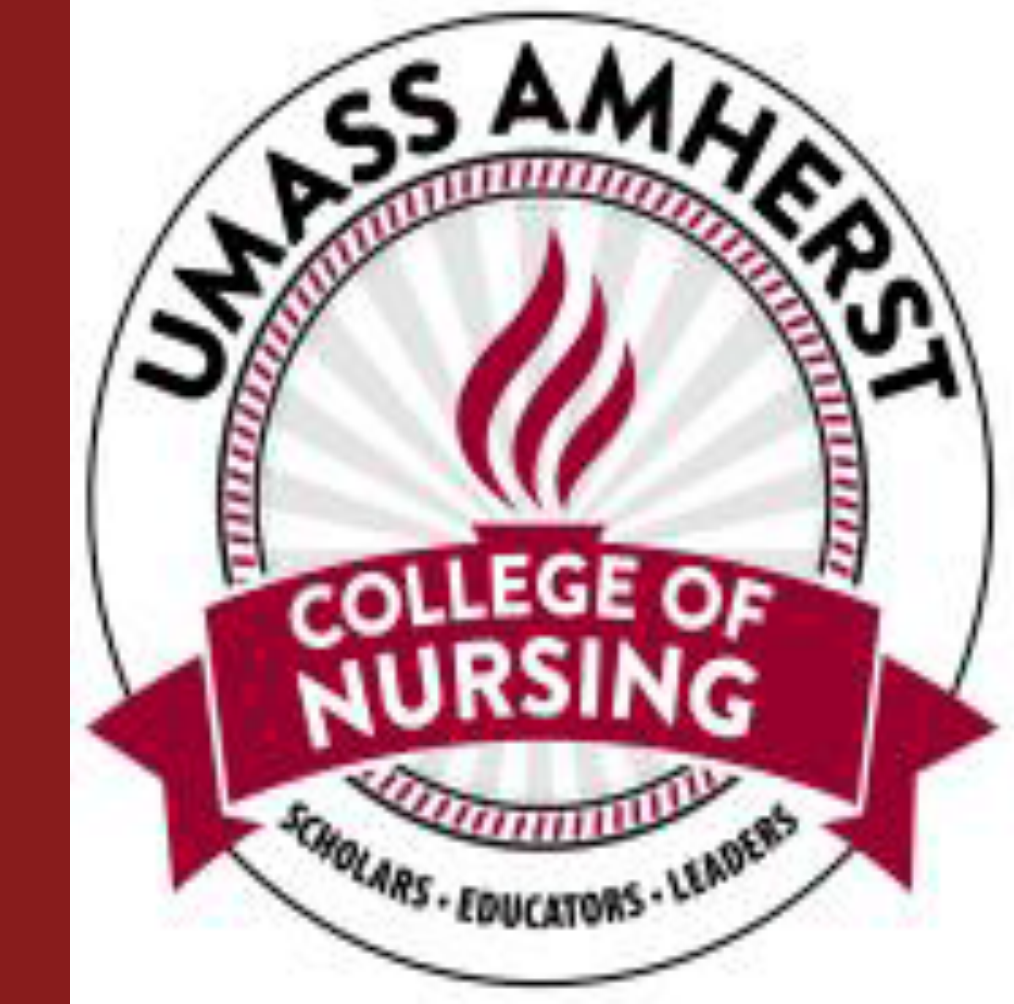


Illustrating the Theory of the Dynamic Nurse-Patient Relationship

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Introduction

Nurses are often the first members of the health care team with whom patients interact. The initial impression of the nurses' receptiveness to the patients' needs influences the patients' views of their overall care. Hospital executives recognize this, and understand that the nurses' communication skills are linked to best care practices and the overall healthcare experiences¹.

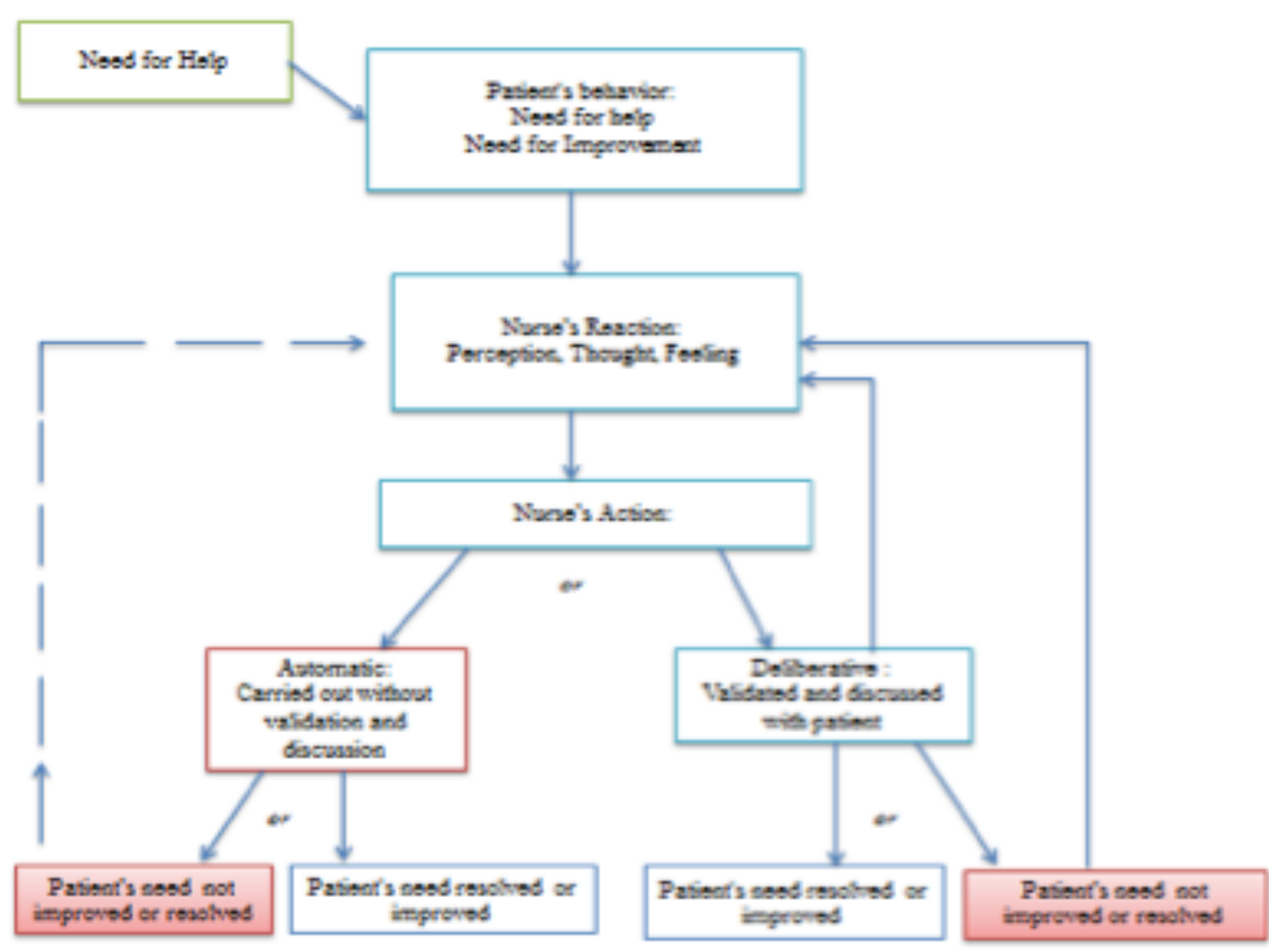
Today's bedside nurse interacts with the patient, often while electronically documenting and keeping pace with the patient's needs. Developing nurse-patient communication that shifts the focus off task completion may enhance patient centered care and minimize nurse controlled communication².

Purpose

This researcher proposes that an illustration of the Theory of the Dynamic Nurse-Patient Relationship can be used as a teaching tool for nurse-patient communication.

Historical & Theoretical Background

The Theory of the Dynamic Nurse-Patient Relationship was formulated after three years observing and participating in the hospital experience with patients, students, nurses, and support staff. The observations and experiences demonstrated that improved patient outcomes were linked to the nurse's observable and non-observable responses to the patient³.



Definitions

Need: "physical and mental comfort to be assured as far as possible while they are undergoing some form of medical treatment or supervision"³(p.5)

Nurse's Reaction: Occurs within the nurse and consists of perception, thought, and feeling. The nurse's action is a result of the reaction.

Nurse's Action: Activity that a nurse carries out or what is said by the nurse to benefit the patient

Automatic: Carried out without verification by the patient; may or may not be of benefit

Deliberative: Communication between the nurse and patient, with verification from the patient that the need was/was not met.

Application to Nursing Education

- Comprehension of communication
- Examination of communication
- Synthesis of exchange
- Assessment of one's own communication

Implications

The illustration can be used during in-class discussions, simulations, and clinical settings. Potential discussion topics include whether the exchange was automatic or deliberative, and the impact on the patient's need. Each student determines their rationale for what they perceive as the nurse's reaction and subsequent action. Reflection and discussion of nurse/patient communication can help to create meaning for the student.

Teaching nursing students to analyze communication in this manner will help them to refocus on whether communication has occurred and whether it was of high quality, encouraging patients to communicate their needs in a timely way.

References

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