

Chapter 13

Advanced Nursing Practices as a Tool for Community Health Development


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ABSTRACT

Community health aims to improve local populations' health through disease prevention, health promotion, and better social, economic, and environmental conditions. It takes a holistic approach, addressing social determinants like housing and education. The field has progressed from basic care to comprehensive strategies, including health promotion and chronic disease management. Community health nurses, with their advanced skills, are vital in assessing needs, planning and implementing programs, and leading efforts. Techniques like GIS and participatory

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research enhance assessments, while models such as PRECEDE-PROCEED guide planning. Successful interventions include smoking reduction and physical activity programs. Advanced practices in behavior change and technology further improve outcomes. In conclusion, advanced nursing practices are crucial for addressing social determinants, enhancing care, and significantly improving public health and reducing disparities.

INTRODUCTION

Community health is an approach to public health that focuses on improving the health and well-being of populations at the local level, with an emphasis on disease prevention, health promotion and the creation of healthy social, economic and environmental conditions. In contrast to traditional health care focused on individuals, community health takes a holistic approach that considers the social determinants of health, such as housing, education, employment and access to health services. Community health nursing practices have evolved considerably over time to meet the changing needs of populations and emerging health challenges. Once focused primarily on providing basic care in communities, community health nursing practices have progressed towards more holistic and preventive approaches, emphasizing health promotion, disease prevention and chronic disease management. Over the decades, community health nurses have acquired advanced skills in community needs assessment, health program planning and implementation, leadership and interprofessional collaboration. They have become key agents of change in promoting the health of populations, working closely with other health professionals, community leaders and local organizations to identify and address priority health issues. Growing recognition of the importance of community health in health promotion and disease prevention has also led to advances in research and evaluation of community interventions. Community health nurses play an important role in generating and applying evidence to inform practice and improve health outcomes for populations.

The areas of intervention of the nurse practitioner with a solid background in community health include the following sections:

1. ADVANCED COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Advanced methods for assessing community health needs include data collection and analysis techniques, as well as the use of advanced technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS) to map health determinants. Data collection

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