

Chapter 15


Community Health Nursing Education in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Health is an equilibrium of biological, physical, social and spiritual factors; the access to health should be socially, culturally and economically viable to ensure the complete state of wellbeing. Having said this community health nursing (CHN) practice at grass root level should also be in congruence to offer culturally sensitive, affordable, available and accessible care to people it serves. However, this is dependent on the quality of education a nurse acquire to work with multidisciplinary team within the community settings. In consideration to this, the development of CHN has been a great journey. The role got recognized at national level especially in undergraduate nursing curriculum. The thoughtful inclusion of the course in cur-

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riculum helped preparing nurses to understand the concept of working with people at grass root level; to empower people for their own health decision.

INTRODUCTION

Community Health Nursing (CHN) practice focuses on culturally sensitive care that is affordable, available, and accessible to the people it serves. The care is focused on social determinants of health, including the environment, age, economic status, etc., that impact the lives of the communities (Thornton & Persaud, 2018). Hence, the quality of services provided is subject to the quality of education (Schofield et al., 2018). Therefore, CHN teaching engages educators as mentors to maximize student's learning and serves as facilitators for improving the community's health and well-being (Schofield et al., 2018). This chapter will discuss the development of CHN as a core component in the nursing curriculum at a national level in Pakistan. It will further delineate CHN education in a local context with the application of the planning cycle as a framework to teach the community as a partner concept to undergraduate nursing students. The chapter will also discuss how classroom teaching on CHN and the Primary Health Care (PHC) approach is integrated into clinical settings for hands-on practice. Moreover, this chapter will also highlight some challenges encountered in preparing future CHNs and recognizing their role in the healthcare system. In addition, the chapter also discusses the dual role of CHN educators which includes preparing future workforce for primary healthcare settings while participating in community-led activities to facilitate the health and developmental needs of the community.

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT

CHN as a core component with hands-on practice in the nursing curriculum was first introduced by Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery (AKUSONAM) Pakistan in the 1980s with the inception of its first batch of diploma in nursing program. This was the time when no other institution taught CHN as a core subject. Over the time, CHN was adopted as a core course by all schools of nursing throughout Pakistan in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs under the regulation of the Pakistan Nursing Council (Mohammad et al., 2019) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. It covers approximately 21% nursing curriculum (Mohammad et al., 2019; Harnar et al., 1993). The concepts are taught on the built-on model of learning, whereby at the undergraduate degree level, the final-year student nurses are taught the concept of “community as a partner”. The

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