Ethical and Policy Issues Related To the Coordination of Care

Name

Institution Affiliation

Date

**Narrative Script**

**Slide 1: Title slide**

Welcome and thank you all for participating in this presentation about ethical and policy issues related to the coordination of care. The presentation is intended to educate nurses who perform nursing home care. I hope this information will benefit you regarding this topic.

**Slide 2: Presentation objectives**

In this presentation, I will address the following areas:

* Governmental policies affecting the coordination of care.
* National, state, and local policy provisions that raise ethical questions.
* Impact of nursing code of ethics on care coordination and continuum.
* Healthy People 2020 factors that facilitate health, health disparities, and access to services.
* Ethical and policy issues in nursing homes care coordination.

**Slide 3: Introduction**

Today, our nursing homes provide care to people who cannot be in hospitals and cannot be at home because they require specialized care. Mostly, nursing homes deal with disabled and elderly adults. Professionals in nursing homes include registered nurses (who assess, diagnose, and plan treatments) and nursing assistants who provide custodial care such as bathing and eating. To succeed in nursing home practices, all stakeholders should facilitate care coordination.

In the nursing field, care coordination refers to patient-centered care management. It requires nurses to monitor and educate patients, coordinate care plans, connect patients to a healthcare provider, and analyze patient progress. Care coordination is critical in nursing homes because it improves the quality of care by reducing hospital admissions due to lack of specialty care. Also, care coordination allows nurses to manage chronic illnesses as well as improving patient satisfaction. However, successful care coordination depends on ethical and policy factors, which may affect nursing homes practices.

**Slide 4: Governmental policies related to nursing homes and how they affect the coordination of care**

I am sure that governmental policies regulate how nursing homes should operate. Some governmental policies related to nursing homes that affect care coordination include the ACA (Affordable Care Act) and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act).

It is clear that some ACA provisions impact the coordination of care in nursing homes directly. For example, the ACA's section 6101 requires all facilities that operate as nursing homes to publicize information about ownership, financial performance, administration, operations, and services (medicareadvocacy.org, 2010). This policy makes sure that clients are aware of what nursing homes offer before seeking their services. One of the objectives of coordination of care is to enhance information sharing among the stakeholders. Hence, ACA's section 6101 achieves this objective by providing information that people need to compare nursing homes that offer quality services at a reduced cost. Also, ACA's section 6105 introduced another policy where NHC (Nursing Home Compare) website should provide accessible complaint form (medicareadvocacy.org, 2010). Concerning the coordination of care, nursing homes should make sure that the patient has access to necessary services within or outside the facility. Hence, ACA's section 6105 improves care coordination by giving consumers a chance to report frauds.

**Slide 5:**

Apart from ACA provisions, HIPAA provides governmental policies that regulate how a nursing home (operating as HIPAA-covered entities) should handle patient information. The first provision is about data privacy, which requires nursing homes to share patient information only if the recipient is authorized (Hhs.gov, 2013). This policy promotes effective and error-free coordination of care by excluding entities or people who are not part of the patient’s care management. For example, nursing homes can only share patient information with an authorized family member or healthcare providers–as a way of care coordination because both entities focus on serving the client. Another HIPAA provision is that covered entities should allow clients to access copies of their health information (Hhs.gov, 2013). This policy promotes care coordination by allowing clients to participate in their care.

**Slide 5: National, state, and local policy provisions that raise ethical questions for care coordination**

We require our healthcare professionals to uphold government policies to demonstrate competency in their work. Health policies protect patients and guide nurses in the decision-making process, but they may cause ethical dilemmas. Nurses may find it difficult to choose one option and leave the other when practicing national, state, or local policies.

Under national health policies, the HIPAA data privacy provision raises ethical dilemmas in nursing homes when maintaining the confidentiality of patient information. For example, Bollig, Rosland, and Heller (2016) found that effective communication is always a challenge in nursing homes when handling elderly clients (who may have memory loss), making it hard to obtain informed consent. Thus, if a family member or friend requests patient information, the nurse has to reason whether he/she will be violating HIPAA, considering that the patient is not in a position to provide informed consent. As a result, nurses might be limited to engage all family members and friends in the care of their loved ones.

**Slide 6:**

Under state policies, state payment reform policy raises ethical dilemmas during COVID-19 treatment in nursing homes. Based on this policy, Medicare and Medicaid programs compensate nursing homes for services that are considered necessary. Grabowski (2020) found that elderly adults in nursing homes were affected by the COVID-19 the most. When the elderly (especially those with pre-existing conditions) acquire COVID-19 infection, they develop adverse complications that require additional medical attention. Since state payment reform limits the funds getting to nursing homes, nurses cannot provide quality COVID-19 care due to the higher cost of treatment (Grabowski, 2020). It implies that nurses experience an ethical dilemma when deciding whether to use available resources to manage COVID-19 or continue offering usual nursing home services. As a result, nursing homes require more money from the government to manage COVID-19 issues (Grabowski, 2020).

**Slide 7:**

At the local level, Delaware County has an opioid prescription policy, which prohibits the prescription of opioid medication for more than seven days (Ballotpedia.org, 2021). However, nursing homes deal with patients who might be suffering from chronic pain. Hence, there is an ethical dilemma concerning whether the nurse should allow elderly adults to endure pain or prescribe opioid medication for more than seven days. This ethical question may delay pain management in nursing homes.

**Slide 8: Impact of the code of ethics for nurses on the coordination and continuum of care**

Apart from respecting government policies, nurses use the code of ethics as a guide to help them act according to the interests of patients. For example, the nursing code of ethics requires nurses to put patient interests first and avoid any form of discrimination. These codes of ethics affect care coordination effectively because they remind nurses about their commitment to nursing homes. However, the code of ethics puts a lot of pressure on nurses. For example, nurses may experience psychological stress and burnout because they always care about the patient and forget about their own interests.

**Slide 9: Healthy People 2020 factors that contribute to health, health disparities, and access to services**

In addition to nursing policies and code of ethics, our nursing homes should strive for quality services. Healthy People 2020 provide nursing goals that nursing homes can achieve to enhance care coordination. Under social determinants of Healthy People 2020, factors such as economic stability, community-based resources, and education contribute to health disparities and access to services. If more children can receive education, they will have a better opportunity to be employed to earn income for paying for their healthcare services. If many people can become economically stable, it will be easier for them to own essential things such as housing, clothing, and food. Besides, community-based resources facilitate nursing homes through funds and grants. Hence, social determinant factors facilitate an environment where people can live healthy lives and reduce the possibility of being admitted to nursing homes.

**Slide 10: Ethical and policy issues in nursing homes care coordination**

Before we conclude, it is necessary to note that care coordination requires nurses to interact with a patient. In nursing homes, some ethical issues that may arise include discrimination and unrealistic cost of care. It is unethical to discriminate against patients based on race, color, religion, or economic status. Also, a nurse would be unethical to charge uninsured elderly and disabled people high costs of care. It is because most of them are not employed and depend on others for help. Some of the policy issues that arise in nursing homes include a lack of information confidentiality and transparency. It is against the HIPAA policy to leak patient data to third entities without the client's permission. Also, nursing homes should publicize all operations to enhance transparency and avoid violating ACA policy.

**Slide 11: Conclusion**

In conclusion, policies and ethics are vital in the operation of nursing homes. Nurses should demonstrate competency in their work by adhering to policies and codes of ethics provided by the government and organization in which they work. Some of the policies that impact care coordination include ACA and HIPAA. Also, nurses should respect state and local level policies such as payment reform and opioid prescription policy to avoid litigations in local governments. Besides, nurses should always follow the code of nursing ethics and address all ethical and policy issues in order to succeed in the coordination of care in nursing homes.

References

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