

Sample Nursing Essay on Leadership and Management

Leadership and management are equally important in the nursing profession. At a base level, managers have an administrative role that is responsible for overseeing resources and maintaining nursing organizational structure. On the other hand, leadership in nursing demands a high degree of skill to implement change and accomplish common goals among team members.

A manager can be defined as a person who has responsibility for the oversight of resources within an organization. In this sense, all nurses have managerial roles because they are responsible for managing patients when they do not have enough staffing. For example, nurses will manage patient care when they determine how much medication to administer by balancing risk vs benefit factors under staff-constrained conditions. Thus, it can be said that nurses function as managers when performing certain duties.

In much the same way, a leader in nursing is defined as having influence over the thoughts and behaviors of subordinates to accomplish common goals. The impact of a nurse manager or leader on patient outcomes has been called 'the gray zone of care'. That means that managers and leaders have a high degree of impact on patient outcomes but their effect cannot be easily measured because it is often indirect. An example could be a hospital leadership taking decisions for improving health information systems instead of direct patient care activities. Also, even though the effect might not be immediate, being under leadership from nurses can have major long term benefits whether it's an experienced direct care nurse who leads trainees during clinicals or how upper management nurses function as key decision makers for the future of their organization.

Leadership and management is most prominent in healthcare because nurses are often working with complex systems that put them in a position of great responsibility. It is their ability to manage resources and structure that most impacts patient care since they must prioritize patients at risk due to staffing shortages or lack of resources such as medications, IV fluids, and durable medical equipment. A nurse manager may also need to take on tasks beyond traditional management such as dealing directly with angry or upset patients and their families when there has been a serious error or accident. Meanwhile, leaders play an important role in obtaining resources for the facility and providing additional training for staff members as well as employees at all levels.

In summary, management and leadership go hand-in-hand in the nursing profession because both functions are needed to provide high quality patient care.