

Holistic Healthcare: The Interconnection of Nursing, Surgical Anesthesia, Patient Care, Health Management, and Dentistry

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Abstract: Holistic healthcare emphasizes the interconnectedness of various disciplines to provide comprehensive patient care that addresses physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. In nursing, practitioners play a critical role by coordinating care and fostering communication among various healthcare providers, including surgical anesthetists, dentists, and health managers. By advocating for patient-centered approaches, nurses ensure that anesthesia practices are conducted with the patient's overall health in mind, taking into account not only the technical aspects of surgery but also the patient's psychological well-being. Additionally, integrating holistic principles into dental care recognizes the importance of oral health in overall wellness, recognizing that conditions such as gum disease can significantly impact systemic health. Moreover, effective health management encompasses the collaborative efforts of all healthcare professionals involved in a patient's journey—from pre-operative assessments led by registered nurses to anesthesiologists who guarantee patient safety during surgical procedures, all the way to post-surgical care and follow-ups with dentists. This synergy creates a continuum of care that prioritizes patient satisfaction and outcomes. By adopting a holistic approach, healthcare systems can cultivate a culture of teamwork, valuing each discipline's expertise while working towards a common goal: promoting comprehensive health and well-being. This collaboration not only enhances clinical outcomes but also builds a more robust healthcare framework that addresses the needs of patients as whole individuals.

Keywords: Holistic healthcare, nursing, surgical anesthesia, patient care, health management, dentistry

Introduction:

Holistic healthcare transcends the traditional biomedical model, positing that health is not merely the absence of disease but a dynamic state influenced by an intricate interplay of physical, emotional, social, and spiritual factors. This essay will explore the multifaceted dimensions of holistic healthcare, particularly focusing on the interdependence of nursing, surgical anesthesia, patient care, health management, and dentistry [1].

The nursing profession serves as a cornerstone of the healthcare system, with nurses often acting as primary advocates and caregivers throughout the

patient experience. The holistic perspective in nursing encompasses not only the physical aspects of patient care but also the emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. Nurses employ a patient-centered approach, recognizing the unique contexts of individuals' lives that shape their health outcomes. As frontline providers, nurses are pivotal in fostering relationships that promote trust, empowerment, and shared decision-making between patients and healthcare providers. This relational aspect of care is essential for enhancing patient engagement and adherence to treatment plans [2].

Surgical anesthesia represents another critical component of holistic healthcare. The role of

anesthesia providers extends beyond the operational confines of the surgical theater. Anesthetists ensure that patients are not only physically prepared for surgery but also psychologically supported throughout the process. The preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative phases necessitate a comprehensive assessment of the patient's medical history, psychological state, and social supports. Amidst the technical complexities of anesthesia, there exists a profound responsibility to ensure patient comfort and safety through effective communication and empathy, aligning with the holistic principles that underpin quality care [3].

Patient care embodies the integration of healthcare processes, emphasizing the need for coordination and collaboration across different specialties, including nursing, surgical anesthesia, and beyond. A holistic approach to patient care encompasses a thorough understanding of each patient's unique healthcare journey, necessitating interprofessional collaboration to address the varied and complex needs of individuals. Research has indicated that a holistic model of patient care is associated with improved health outcomes, as it considers the myriad factors influencing health rather than treating isolated symptoms. The establishment of multidisciplinary care teams can facilitate this collaborative approach, offering a rich confluence of skills and expertise that empowers patients to take an active role in their healthcare decisions [4].

Health management plays a vital role in supporting holistic healthcare by ensuring that resources, policies, and practices align with the overarching goal of patient-centered care. Effective health management systems utilize data analytics and population health strategies to identify disparities, improve access to care, and manage chronic conditions in a holistic manner. This aspect of healthcare management emphasizes the importance of preventative care, education, and community engagement, thereby fostering a culture of health that extends beyond individual patient encounters to encompass broader societal factors. The integration of health management with clinical practices ensures that healthcare delivery systems effectively address the full spectrum of patient needs [5].

Moreover, dentistry constitutes an essential component of holistic healthcare that is often overlooked. Dental health is intrinsically linked to overall health, with a multitude of studies suggesting

that oral health impacts systemic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory issues. Holistic dental care goes beyond cavity prevention and treatment; it involves a comprehensive approach that recognizes the interactions between oral health and general well-being. Dentists, like other healthcare providers, must consider the social and emotional aspects of patient care, creating supportive environments that encourage open dialogue and trust [6].

The Integral Role of Nursing: Bridging Gaps in Holistic Care

Holistic care is a comprehensive approach that recognizes the interconnection between the physical, psychological, emotional, and social aspects of an individual's well-being. It goes beyond symptom management to address the overall health and quality of life of patients. Holistic care acknowledges that each patient is a unique individual with personal experiences and needs, which can significantly influence their response to treatment. In this context, nurses play a pivotal role in delivering care that encompasses not just medical interventions but also emotional support, education, and advocacy, shaping a well-rounded approach to patient care. The Role of Nurses in Coordinating Care include: [7]

1. Patient Advocacy and Communication

Nurses serve as advocates for their patients, acting as a liaison between patients and the broader healthcare team. They are often the first point of contact for patients and their families, providing reassurance and clarity in times of uncertainty. Nurses are skilled communicators, able to translate complex medical jargon into understandable terms for patients, thereby enabling informed decision-making. Their ability to listen and empathize with patients fosters trust, which is crucial in establishing a therapeutic relationship [8].

2. Collaboration with Healthcare Providers

The modern healthcare environment is characterized by the participation of diverse professionals, including physicians, therapists, social workers, and pharmacists. Nurses function as coordinators among these various providers, ensuring that the patient's needs are met and that care is seamless. For instance, when a patient is admitted to a hospital, the nurse not

only assesses the patient's immediate medical needs but also considers any social determinants of health that could affect recovery. By communicating effectively with other healthcare professionals, nurses facilitate a collaborative approach to care that can significantly enhance patient outcomes [9].

3. Care Coordination Across Settings

Patients often navigate through multiple healthcare settings, ranging from primary care offices to specialized clinics and hospitals. Nurses are essential for coordinating care transitions, particularly when patients are discharged from hospitals to their homes or to rehabilitation facilities. They provide crucial discharge planning, ensuring that patients understand their follow-up care requirements, medications, and warning signs to watch for. By doing so, nurses help to reduce readmission rates and improve patients' overall health trajectories [10].

4. Monitoring and Managing Chronic Conditions

Chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma require ongoing management and support, often involving multiple healthcare providers. Nurses are at the forefront of chronic disease management, educating patients on self-monitoring techniques and lifestyle changes and helping to implement care plans tailored to individual needs. Their ongoing support empowers patients to take an active role in managing their health, promoting better adherence to treatment regimens and reducing the risk of complications [11].

5. Emphasizing Patient Education and Empowerment

Patient education is a vital component of nursing practice. By providing patients with the knowledge and resources they need, nurses enable individuals to make informed choices about their health. This educational aspect extends to understanding medications, recognizing symptoms, and adopting healthier lifestyle practices. By empowering patients to take charge of their health, nurses contribute to improved adherence to treatment plans and a greater sense of agency in their own care [9].

6. Addressing Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being

In recognition of the integral role of mental health in overall well-being, nurses are increasingly involved in addressing emotional and psychological concerns. They are trained to assess mental health needs and can provide interventions or referrals for additional support. This holistic approach recognizes that health encompasses not just physical aspects but also mental wellness, and nurses play a crucial role in ensuring that patients receive integrated care that addresses all facets of their health [12].

Despite the critical role nurses play in coordinating care, several challenges hinder their effectiveness. High patient-to-nurse ratios in acute settings can limit the time available for patient interactions and thorough assessments. Additionally, bureaucratic obstacles, insufficient interprofessional communication, and inadequate resources can impede the seamless coordination of care [3].

The increasing complexity of healthcare, driven by advancements in technology and the rise of chronic diseases, further complicates the nursing role. Nurses must continually update their skills and knowledge to remain effective coordinators. However, it is essential to recognize that investing in nursing education and supporting nurse-led initiatives can lead to improved patient outcomes and a healthier population [7].

The Role of Anesthesiologists in the Context

An anesthesiologist is a medical doctor specializing in anesthesia, pain management, and critical care medicine. This role is multifaceted and encompasses numerous responsibilities throughout all phases of surgical care—preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative [11].

1. Preoperative Assessment: Before surgery, anesthesiologists perform comprehensive evaluations of patients' medical histories, current health status, and any potential risks related to anesthesia. This step is crucial as it aids in formulating an individualized anesthesia plan that aligns with the patient's unique needs, medical conditions, and the type of surgery being performed. This initial assessment contributes significantly to both safety and efficacy, reducing the chances of complications during and after surgery [13].

2. **Intraoperative Management:** Once the surgery begins, anesthesiologists are responsible for administering anesthesia and monitoring the patient's vital signs, including heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen saturation. They make real-time adjustments to anesthesia levels based on the surgical conditions and patient responses. Precision in this phase is paramount, as it directly impacts the patient's experience by minimizing pain and anxiety, while also ensuring that the surgical team can operate effectively [14].

3. **Postoperative Care:** After surgery, anesthesiologists continue to play a vital role in managing pain and monitoring recovery. They administer analgesics and other medications to ease discomfort and potentially prevent postoperative complications such as nausea or delirium. Effective postoperative pain management is crucial for patient satisfaction, recovery speed, and overall quality of life post-surgery [15].

The importance of anesthesiologists in promoting patient safety cannot be overstated. According to numerous studies, the presence of an anesthesiologist in the operating room is associated with lower rates of complications and improved patient outcomes. Key safety measures include [11]:

- **Identification and Mitigation of Risks:** Anesthesiologists are trained to identify potential complications related to anesthesia and the surgical procedure. Their expertise enables them to implement proactive measures, such as choosing the appropriate anesthetic technique or adjusting medication dosages based on real-time monitoring of the patient's condition [16].

- **Emergency Preparedness:** In an environment where unexpected events can occur, anesthesiologists are trained to handle emergencies such as anaphylaxis, cardiac arrest, or unanticipated sedation reactions. Anesthesiologists often lead rapid response teams, showcasing their ability to maintain a state of readiness, ensuring that they can respond swiftly and effectively should complications arise [17].

- **Collaborative Decision-Making:** Anesthesiologists work closely with surgeons and other team members to establish a shared understanding of the surgical procedure, which creates a cohesive approach to patient management.

Through collaboration and communication, the surgical team can devise strategies to enhance safety and ensure the surgery proceeds as smoothly as possible [14].

Enhancing the Patient Experience in Holistic Care

Holistic care in the surgical context emphasizes the consideration of the whole patient—not just their physical needs but also their emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Anesthesiologists play a vital role in achieving this comprehensive approach [10]:

1. **Building Trust and Connection:** The preoperative interaction between anesthesiologists and patients allows patients to express concerns, ask questions, and gain knowledge about their anesthesia and surgical experience. Establishing this rapport builds trust, which can alleviate anxiety and improve the overall patient experience [12].

2. **Management of Anxiety and Pain:** By focusing on effective pain management and employing adjunct techniques such as regional anesthesia or intravenous sedation, anesthesiologists can provide not just physical relief but also alleviate emotional stress associated with surgery. Tailoring anesthetic approaches to consider patients' preferences (e.g., opting for fewer invasive techniques) further exemplifies a commitment to holistic care [18].

3. **Postoperative Support:** Anesthesiologists are instrumental in postoperative recovery by ensuring that patients are not only physically stable but also emotionally supported. Their ongoing involvement helps in recognizing potential psychological distress, thus facilitating interventions that aid recovery, both physical and mental [19].

The Interplay Between Dental Health and Overall Wellness

The mouth is a complex ecosystem inhabited by billions of bacteria, some of which are beneficial, while others can lead to disease. When dental hygiene practices are neglected, these pathogenic bacteria can proliferate, leading to oral diseases such as gingivitis and periodontitis. However, the ramifications of poor oral health extend far beyond the mouth. Research has increasingly shown that the inflammatory processes associated with oral diseases may contribute to systemic illnesses,

thereby linking oral health disorders with various chronic diseases [20].

Several pathways illustrate how poor dental health influences systemic health. The bacteria from periodontal disease can enter the bloodstream, triggering systemic inflammation and prompting conditions such as cardiovascular disease and stroke. In addition, the heightened inflammatory response can exacerbate pre-existing conditions, making effective management of diseases like diabetes even more challenging [17].

One of the most well-documented connections between oral health and systemic illness is the relationship between periodontal disease and cardiovascular health. Studies have shown that individuals diagnosed with periodontal disease are at a higher risk of developing heart disease. The oral bacteria that accumulate in the gums can enter the bloodstream, leading to the formation of plaques in the arteries. This process may ultimately result in atherosclerosis, a condition characterized by the hardening and narrowing of blood vessels, increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes [21].

Moreover, the inflammation linked to periodontal disease is thought to contribute to elevated levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a marker associated with increased cardiovascular risk. Therefore, maintaining good dental hygiene may serve not just to preserve oral health, but also to fortify cardiovascular wellness [22].

Diabetes presents another key area where oral health and overall wellness intersect. Individuals with diabetes are more susceptible to gum disease due to the effects of high blood sugar levels, which can reduce the body's ability to fight infections, including those affecting the gums. Conversely, gum disease can make it harder to control blood sugar, creating a vicious cycle that can lead to further complications [23].

Numerous studies have revealed that effective periodontal treatment can result in improved glycemic control in individuals with diabetes. This finding underscores the importance of integrating dental care within the broader management plans for diabetic patients. Regular dental check-ups and preventive measures should, therefore, be considered a significant aspect of diabetes care [21].

Emerging research has shed light on the relationship between oral health and respiratory diseases, including pneumonia and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Bacteria from the mouth can be aspirated into the lungs, leading to respiratory infections or exacerbating existing lung conditions. For instance, elderly individuals in care facilities are particularly at risk if they have poor oral hygiene, which can increase the prevalence of pneumonia [24].

Thus, maintaining good oral health can potentially lower the risk of respiratory issues, highlighting the necessity of dental care for vulnerable populations. Preventive measures, such as routine dental cleanings and patient education about the importance of maintaining oral hygiene, are vital preventive steps that can yield substantial health benefits [25].

Furthermore, the interplay between dental health and overall wellness extends to mental health. Poor dental health can significantly affect an individual's self-esteem and quality of life. Issues such as tooth decay, missing teeth, or gum disease can lead to embarrassment or social anxiety, hampering personal and professional interactions [23].

Moreover, studies have indicated that individuals with oral health problems may experience increased levels of stress and depression. The reciprocal nature of this relationship cannot be overstated; poor mental health can lead to neglect in dental hygiene, thereby creating a cyclical pattern of deterioration. Addressing oral health issues, therefore, can positively impact mental wellness, improving overall quality of life [25].

The correlations between oral health and overall wellness demonstrate the importance of a holistic approach to healthcare. It is crucial for healthcare practitioners, including dentists, physicians, and nutritionists, to work collaboratively in recognizing the interconnectedness of bodily systems. This integrative approach should encompass regular dental check-ups as a routine part of healthcare strategy, emphasizing preventive dental care and early intervention [26].

Promoting public awareness regarding the significance of oral health is equally paramount. Educational campaigns should inform the populace of the links between oral hygiene and systemic health issues, empowering individuals to prioritize

their dental health. Individuals should be encouraged to adopt robust oral hygiene practices—such as regular brushing, flossing, and dental check-ups—as these habits contribute not only to oral health but also to overall wellness [12].

Patient Care: A Comprehensive Approach

Holistic patient care involves treating the person as a whole rather than merely addressing isolated symptoms or conditions. This model acknowledges the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, and spiritual health and how they influence one another. For instance, chronic illness can impact mental health, just as emotional distress can manifest as physical symptoms. A holistic approach aims to promote overall well-being, underscoring the importance of addressing all aspects of a patient's life [27].

Physical Health

At the core of patient care is the emphasis on physical health, which includes disease prevention, treatment, management of long-term conditions, and rehabilitation. Healthcare providers utilize a variety of methods to assess and support physical health, including routine screenings, diagnostic tests, and medication management. However, comprehensive patient care goes beyond these clinical interventions. It also integrates health education, nutrition counseling, and lifestyle modifications, emphasizing the patient's role in their wellness journey [28].

Multidisciplinary Teams: A significant aspect of holistic care is the collaboration among healthcare professionals from various disciplines. In a model that promotes comprehensive patient care, physicians, nurses, dietitians, physical therapists, and mental health professionals work synergistically to develop and implement tailored care plans. This cooperative approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of a patient's conditions, facilitating better treatment outcomes [29].

Patient Empowerment: An essential component of physical health care is empowering patients to take an active role in their health. Encouraging self-management through education about their conditions, medication adherence, and lifestyle choices cultivates a sense of agency. When patients are informed and engaged, they are more likely to

adhere to treatment plans and seek assistance when needed [30].

Emotional Health

Emotional health plays a crucial role in patient care, as individuals' mental states significantly influence physical recovery. Various studies have illustrated the correlation between emotional well-being and health outcomes, emphasizing the need for mental health support in patient care [11].

The Impact of Chronic Illness: Living with chronic conditions can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation. Healthcare providers are increasingly recognizing the necessity of screening for mental health disorders as part of a comprehensive patient assessment. Integrating mental health services allows for timely referrals to therapists, psychologists, or counselors, ensuring patients receive the appropriate emotional support they need [31].

Therapeutic Communication: Effective communication is at the heart of quality patient care. Healthcare providers must cultivate therapeutic relationships characterized by empathy, active listening, and open dialogue. This rapport not only fosters trust but also enables patients to express their concerns and emotions freely, paving the way for tailored emotional support [32].

Spiritual Health

Spiritual health, albeit often overlooked in conventional models of patient care, constitutes a vital component in comprehensively addressing patient needs. For many individuals, spiritual beliefs and practices can offer comfort, hope, and a sense of purpose during times of illness [19].

Understanding Spirituality: Spirituality varies significantly among individuals, encompassing religious beliefs, personal convictions, or a broader quest for meaning. Recognizing the spiritual dimension of health involves assessing patients' spiritual needs and providing support that aligns with their beliefs. This may involve simple inquiries about spiritual practices or offering resources such as chaplaincy services [11].

Supporting Coping Mechanisms: Healthcare providers can assist patients in utilizing their spirituality as a coping mechanism. Engaging with spiritual resources may help patients find solace and

fortitude during bouts of suffering. Moreover, ceremonies, rituals, or simply allowing patients to express their spiritual concerns can enable them to process their experiences in a supportive and nonjudgmental environment [33].

The interconnection between physical, emotional, and spiritual health is paramount in patient care. A deficiency in one area can lead to deterioration in the others—physically sick patients may experience emotional distress, while emotionally challenged individuals may neglect their physical health. Comprehensive patient care aims to identify and address these interdependencies [34].

Care Coordination: Effective patient care often necessitates care coordination, where healthcare providers communicate and collaborate to create a seamless experience for patients. This may involve the organization of care transitions, case management, and engaging family caregivers, which can minimize the fragmentation often experienced in healthcare settings [35].

Patient-Centered Care: Emphasizing the patient's unique preferences and values in care decisions is crucial. In patient-centered care, patients remain an integral part of the decision-making process, allowing for personalized treatment plans that resonate with their overall health goals [36].

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the interconnectedness of nursing, surgical anesthesia, patient care, health management, and dentistry highlights the complexities and interdependencies inherent in achieving holistic healthcare. By embracing a holistic perspective, healthcare professionals can transcend traditional boundaries, fostering collaboration and communication among disciplines. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, it becomes increasingly imperative to cultivate an integrated approach that recognizes the multifaceted nature of health, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes and a more sustainable healthcare system. This research will further explore the individual contributions of each discipline and their collective impact on the holistic health paradigm, providing insights into best practices, challenges, and future directions in the delivery of comprehensive, patient-centered care.

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