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THE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE WORK OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST AND REGISTERED NURSE IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS IN THE UK

The UK healthcare adopts the multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to ensure the health care provided is effective and responsive to patients' needs. Such teams encompass a host of professions from various fields that have their expertise in addressing the diverse, complex needs that present themselves among patients. Two of the most integral members of such a multidisciplinary team probably are occupational therapists (OTs) and registered nurses (RNs). While these two professions have distinct responsibilities, they often work collaboratively to enhance patient outcomes, continuity of care, and efficiency in general health care [4].

Role and Scope of Practice. RNs form the backbone of patient care in the UK health care services. RNs deliver direct patient care, monitor the patients' health, conduct medication management, and serve as the primary channel of communication between the client and the MDT. Nurses may be employed in a number of different settings, including hospitals, primary care trusts, community services, and patients' homes. RNs are expected to provide safe, evidence-based care, and advocacy for their patients while considering each patient's individual needs and humanely treating them with respect to their dignity [5].

Occupational therapy, in turn, deals with helping a person become independent in everyday aspects of life. Occupational therapists are very important in assisting such patients whose physical or mental conditions or illness has reduced their ability to perform daily activities. Some occupational therapists practice their skills in UK hospitals, while others operate in community healthcare, schools, mental health centers, and homes. They work towards enabling patients to achieve maximum functional independence, quality of life, and social participation [1].

Health Assessment and Monitoring. RNs carry out comprehensive health assessments, record observations of the physical and mental conditions of patients. They observe vital signs, symptoms, and reactions to treatments and medications. They continuously monitor conditions to recognize the early onset of deterioration or complication, which is quite significant for timely intervention [6]. For example, a post-operative patient would receive an assessment from a RN regarding wound healing, pain management, infection surveillance, and revision of the care plan whenever necessary.

OTs assess the competencies and limitations of the patients by standardized assessments, observational analysis, and interviews with the patient. Assessments may range from mobility, cognitive, motor, and even social functioning. Based on the assessment, OTs develop an intervention plan tailored to the individual that targets certain goals, such as increasing mobility, restoring cognitive function, or learning adaptive ways of completing daily activities. For instance, an OT dealing with a stroke patient would devise an intervention plan aimed at regaining fine motor movements, rebuilding cognitive functions, and teaching adaptive methods of caring for oneself through activities like dressing, eating, and bathing. This is constantly reviewed and updated according to the progress of the patient [1].

Main responsibilities. RNs are in charge of care coordination among all MDT members. They ensure care is not fragmented, and is updated among members on changes in the status of the patient. For instance, when a patient requires extended physiotherapy or nutritional management, the RN communicates with the appropriate specialist to include such services in the plan of care for the patient. In managing long-term conditions such as diabetes or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), RNs plan patient teaching, medication, and lifestyle, integrating the services provided by dietitians, physiotherapists, and social workers. RNs coordinate complex care plans to ensure that the care delivered is holistic and continuous.

Medication administration is one area of critical responsibility for RNs. Hence, RNs in the UK should exercise caution while handling medicines by oral or intravenous routes or whatever route it might be. They have to educate the patients about various medicines and their frequency and the different side effects of the medicine. They have to monitor the therapeutic effectiveness. This proper management of medicines by RNs reduces adverse effects and potential drug interactions and also ensures that patients will adhere to prescribed treatments.

RNs advocate for the rights and preferences of patients, especially when difficult decisions surrounding care involve the patient. To do this, RNs deliver knowledge to patients and their families, facilitate informed decision-making, and promote patient-centered care. For instance, during the end-of-life care, the RN works collaboratively with the patient and family to ensure that the patient's wishes are carried out: this can include choices related to palliative care or considerations regarding life-sustaining treatments [6].

On its part, collaboration with the other members of the MDT is central to the role of an RN. It is through this interaction that RNs expose themselves to the physician, OT, social worker, and pharmacist in order to share vital information regarding the patient's condition, their care needs, and personal goals. Such collaboration plays a key role in complicated cases where several

interventions must be aligned and adjusted in cooperation with the patient's evolving condition. For example, a RN collaborating with an OT and physiotherapist could plan daily activities of care so that the patient's therapy sessions will be carried out in concert with the patient's medical needs and recovery goals.

A core role of the OTs is in rehabilitation and adaptation. The OTs work with MDTs in the UK by providing an environment that will assist in the recovery and adaptation. They may recommend environmental modification – installing grab rails, ramps, and specific equipment that may facilitate access either at home or at work. OTs also teach their patients the use of assistive devices and adaptive equipment, which may empower such individuals to take control of their lives [1].

Occupational therapists support health literacy and preventive practices for patients and their families. Such interventions may include recommending ergonomic practices to prevent workplace injury, providing strategies for managing chronic pain, or leading community education programs on mental health resiliency. By integrating education into their practice, OTs are attempting to decrease hospital readmission, prevent injuries, and encourage a proactive approach toward health.

In the MDT, OTs work in close collaboration, especially with physiotherapists, psychologists, and nurses. They share discussion related to the patient's functional ability and progress, and share decision-making responsibilities. For example, an OT might work with a physiotherapist to match rehabilitation exercises to functional goals. Similarly, OTs work together with RNs in observing and advancing holistic patients to ensure care planning addresses medical concerns, safety issues, and personal concerns [4].

Collaborative Relationship between Occupational Therapists and Registered Nurses. *Shared Objectives and Patient-Centered Care.* OTs and RNs are guided by one objective: the advancement of patient health and independence. They collaborate in MDTs to create complex care plans, considering the medical and functional perspectives of a patient's condition. Using the example of a patient following hip surgery, the RN would contribute pain management and wound healing, while the OT would design a mobility exercise program and order adaptive equipment to promote independence. They all put together help the patient regain confidence and improved physical functioning, as well as integration back into daily life [2, 3, 7].

Communication and Information Sharing. For coordinated care to be effected between OTs and RNs, effective and close communication has to be ensured. Regular meetings, handover reports, and electronic health records all

facilitate flow of information and are helpful in keeping the OT and RN current concerning the patients' status. Patients with complicated conditions change many things depending on the patient's progress toward treatment outcomes and the rehabilitation goals, therefore requiring current communication [2, 3, 7].

Holistic Care Delivery. OTs and RNs deliver holistic care through attention to the medical and functional levels of the patient's health. For example, about the setting of mental health, the RN may address the symptoms of the patient related to psychiatric concerns and medication response, while the OT develops strategies for stressors coping, improvement of social skills, and involvement with meaningful activities. Such a team approach attends to the mental, physical, and emotional needs of the patient, facilitating a more holistic recovery [2, 3, 7].

Patient and Family Education. Both OTs and RNs educate the patients and their families about how to manage their conditions at home. For example, for a patient with Parkinson's disease, the RN might teach the family about medication compliance and symptoms to monitor, while the OT instructs the patient in exercises to enhance mobility and coordination. By the same virtue, they also engage the family members in the care process more actively and hence might achieve an enhanced health status with reduced consumption of healthcare services [2, 3, 7].

Conclusion. In the UK's multidisciplinary healthcare teams, RNs and OTs play different yet complementing roles. While OTs address the issues of concerns in making patients independent and dealing with changed lives, RNs develop clinical care plans for the patients and advocate on behalf of the well-being of their patients. By working as a team, they provide a holistic, patient-centered approach which tends not only to medical needs but also to daily functioning. Their collaboration will not only advance quality but also foster the achievement of optimal patient outcomes across various healthcare settings.

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