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## HUMANISM IN HEALTHCARE

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### Abstract:

*"Human beings need to behave well in this world, not any other  
We stand on our own feet, and our feet are human feet"*

*- Simon Blackburn*

### KEY WORDS:

Humanism, Healthcare, Communication, Professionals.

### INTRODUCTION:

Humanistic Healthcare or values-based Healthcare is an interdisciplinary field in the practice of clinical care, aimed at the problems of contemporary health care. The fundamental principles of humanistic healthcare are open communication, mutual respect, and emotional connection between health care professionals and their patients, termed "relationship-centered" or "patient-centered" care, in contrast to "case-centred" or "disease centred" care.

The humanism in health care means "holistic healing"--defined as treating not only the body but caring the soul also. It attempts to complement physical recovery by connecting with patients through empathy, patience, and compassion. It is the humanistic belief that part of one's suffering during illness stems from the feeling of isolation from other human beings while in a weakened state. By reestablishing this connection, true healing can begin to take place.

### HUMANIST IS SOMEONE:

\*Trust to the scientific method when it comes to understanding how the universe works and rejects the idea of the supernatural.

\*Makes their ethical decisions based on reason, empathy, and a concern for human beings and other sentient animals.

\*Believes that, in the absence of an afterlife and any discernible purpose to the universe, human beings can act to give their own lives meaning by seeking happiness in this life and helping others to do the same.

Humanism places a high value on human beings, human culture and the human experience. Humanism in healthcare reminds us that illness and recovery, living and dying, are an integral part of the whole human experience. Every person throughout the health system whether caregiver or patient is first and foremost a human being. Humanistic health professionals care about their patients as much as they care for them. They understand that compassion can be a powerful stimulator for healing. Humanism in healthcare recalls us to ourselves as human beings and members of society. It is a great privilege - and a great responsibility.

Throughout recorded history there have been non-religious people who have believed that this life is the only life we have, that the universe is a natural phenomenon with no supernatural side, and that we can live ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity. They have trusted to the scientific method, evidence and reason to discover truths about the universe and placed human welfare and happiness

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at the centre of their ethical decision making. People who share these beliefs and values are called humanists and this combination of attitudes is called Humanism.

Humanizing communication involves an awareness of the unique Characteristics of being human; dehumanizing communication ignores these unique human characteristics.

**Holistic Care:** It is proposed that nurses communicating in a humanizing manner are a necessary factor in achieving holistic health care and improved collaborative professional relationships. Communicating with a concern for the individual's feelings needs, and selfimage. One aspect of the role of the professional nurse in practicing humanizing nursing is being aware of his/her self as a variable in the nurse client relationship. It is proposed that students and practitioners of nursing need to be sensitive to their own feelings and encouraged in the development of this self-awareness. To the extent one is aware of one's own feelings and thoughts, to a greater extent one tends to become sensitive to others. People who become nurses need to be particularly sensitive to others' feelings and experience, and nurses also need to be Skilled in communicating this awareness and sensitivity to others.

### **Five chief components of humanism in healthcare**

1. Empathetic listening is an important aspect of healthcare humanism. It involves an understanding of the patient's illness and unique vulnerabilities. Choose words so as to avoid any unnecessary medical jargon which can completely hinder understanding. Some expressions can even have a negative impact on a sick patient. Signify interest and concern conveying the message that he is important enough to be heard, listened to, and understand.
2. Understanding the patient's experience of illness sympathetically and empathetically is another important feature of humanistic medicine.
3. Physicians must strive to think clearly and help patients to do the same during diagnosis, prognosis and cure. Thinking involves reasoning and judgement which result in an opinion and subsequent action.
4. To restore the lost art of medicine, the physician must use experience, wisdom, and commonsense blended with a humanistic approach to medicine and patient care.
5. Humane medicine can best be practiced by making decision about medical treatments which take into consideration patient's culture, emotional makeup, availability of treatment options and financial considerations.

It is important to promote humanizing relationships not only between the nurse and client but also between healthcare colleagues. Promotion of humanizing communication is also needed among the nurse and healthcare professionals. Lack of effective communication between the nurses and physicians in the intensive care units has found to impact patient morality and length of stay as much as 1-8 fold.

Among the approaches used to encourage the practice of a more humane medicine are narrative medicine and patient empowerment. Narrative medicine is a way of educating physicians, nurses and other health care providers to emphasize the humanity of patient and provider, enabling the "health care professionals to give care with empathy, reflection, professionalism, and trustworthiness. Humanistic medicine strives to create ideal and balanced care.

### **PROBLEMS FACING IN HEALTHCARE:**

In many countries due to modern medical technology, healthcare systems are facing a lot of difficulties in meeting health demands. These problems are

- \*Distribution of resources and provision of adequate care due to the large number of patients in need.
- \*Healthcare systems now a day become larger and more bureaucratic, so both practitioners and patients experience dehumanization
- \*Healthcare practitioner often experience high levels of stress and burnout
- \*Doctors facing a large number of patients are not giving individual patients the attention they need resulting in patients seeking alternative treatments.

## HUMANISM IN HEALTHCARE



\*The rising costs of medical services, technology, and medication are becoming unaffordable for many patients preventing these individuals from receiving adequate healthcare.

\*Studies have shown that poor doctor-patient relationship result in lawsuits against healthcare providers. These lawsuits have become a major burden to medical personnel.

Characteristics of a humanistic health care professional:

\*Demonstrate consistently compassion and empathy in the delivery of patient care.

\*Show professional and ethical behavior

\*Show respect for everyone

\*Demonstrate cultural diversity when working with patients and family members of diverse backgrounds.

\*Display effective communication and good listening skills.

\*Create a good rapport with all patients.

\*Show respect for the patient's viewpoint.

\*Be sensitive to the patients psychological well-being

\*Be cooperative, easy to work with, endangers trust and confidence

\*Show willingness to help others and when necessary seek help from others.

\*Give concern for the general welfare of the community

\*Engage in volunteer activities.

\*Accept criticism and use it for improving the performance.

## CONCLUSION

To apply humanism in healthcare we need more than keen skills, a sharp mind and steady hand. The best health professionals have heart, not just brains. They have "the human touch." Health professionals must be well-rounded, firmly grounded and genuinely humane individuals, who know how to listen to, respect and care about other people, and they must be with a calling to the field of health, and must make a commitment to helping the underserved. They should be dedicated health professionals who are able to put the care in healthcar

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