

Nursing Innovation

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Nursing shortages, staff burnout, rising healthcare costs, and inconsistencies in innovation across organizations continue to pose challenges to the quality of healthcare delivery (O'Hara et al., 2022). Since nursing makes up the largest healthcare discipline and serves clients in hospitals, clinics, schools, communities, and many other settings, it should be at the forefront of finding solutions to address issues that contribute to these problems. Rigtering et al. (2023) note that the American Nurses Association (ANA) believes nurse innovation should involve developing effective, evidence-based care measures and tools, as well as adopting technologies to promote health, prevent diseases, and enhance patient care quality. The Future of Nursing 2020-2030 report encourages leaders in all areas of healthcare to encourage nurse innovation to promote change across "boundaries" while creating health equity and standardized care (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2021, p. 287). As critical thinkers, nurses recognize effective care measures for their clients and develop innovative ways to deliver patient care. Nurses demonstrated their innovativeness when they revamped their systematic processes amid shortages of personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gafar-Schaner (2025) emphasizes the creativity of nurses and their ability to improvise when supplies are unavailable, enabling them to provide adequate care. In home health, nurses may use a curtain rod and a clothes hanger if an IV pole is not accessible, or a regular, water-resistant chair can serve as a shower bench. In inpatient facilities, Gafar-Schaner (2025) found that nurses used blankets and tape or mesh panties on siderails to keep clients safe when there was a risk of seizure and pads were not available in a smaller hos-

pital. To his amazement, larger hospitals in the same geographical area did not have seizure padding for seizure precautions. Although the blanket secured to the siderails by tape or mesh serves as a barrier between clients during a seizure, it is not failproof. The substitute padding increases the risk of hospital-acquired infections and cross-contamination if not replaced regularly, making it necessary to find alternative solutions (Gafar-Schaner, 2025). He and a fellow nurse developed the Safeseizure Standard and Safeseizure Crib, self-inflating seizure pads for use on adult and pediatric beds and cribs. According to Ferry and Gafar-Schaner (n.d.), approximately one hundred hospitals nationwide currently use the product. This accomplishment is a testament to the fact that nurses can be innovative if given the resources and support to explore and develop various products, technologies, and evidence-based measures addressing current and future issues in client care (Gafar-Schaner, 2025).

Organizations and nurse leaders must promote a culture of nursing innovation (Rylee et al., 2023). As nurses develop innovations, healthcare organizations should widely announce and market them and encourage other institutions to adopt the concepts and practices. The diffusion or dissemination of nursing innovations typically takes about 15 years to influence nursing care as evidence-based practice, according to Rigtering et al. (2023). This process helps promote standardized practices and improve patient care. Smaller hospitals may have limited resources, but they can still work with larger organizations to support nursing innovation. Additionally, they should seek opportunities to access products and technologies that enable their nurses to deliver the best possible care to patients.

As organizations embrace nursing innovation, nurses should be encouraged

to identify solutions to nursing challenges, such as developing products, improving documentation, enhancing medication administration systems, or implementing other best practices. When nurses understand what the institution needs to remain compliant with all accrediting bodies, they should be allowed to share ideas about changes that could improve their workflow to make it more efficient and user-friendly. Providing support, time, and resources for innovative work fosters feelings of empowerment, respect, and job satisfaction.

Nurses recognize the importance of evidence-based care in achieving positive client outcomes. They must also recognize and embrace their innovative qualities and become involved in finding solutions to the complexities impacting healthcare. Although some nurses may not see themselves as innovators, the quality can be cultivated through collaboration with others and support from educators, continuing education programs, nursing leadership, and healthcare organizations (Leary et al., 2024). As the profession becomes more open to questioning current practices and developing ways to improve them, it can enhance proficiency in operations, interdisciplinary practice, quality of care, and cost containment. Nurses are entering an exciting time in the profession to flourish and lead the way to positive changes in healthcare. They will be recognized for the impact they have always made and continue to make in the lives of those entrusted to their care ■

References online:
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