

Nursing in patient safety in Primary Care*Enfermería en la seguridad del paciente en Atención Primaria**Enfermagem na segurança do paciente na Atenção Primária***Elba Alexandre da Silva¹**

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Resumo

Objetivou-se descrever como a enfermagem deve atuar na atenção primária à saúde para garantir a segurança do paciente tendo como objetivos específicos descrever o conceito sobre atenção primária na saúde, compreender a importância da segurança do paciente na atenção primária na saúde e discutir como a enfermagem deve atuar na atenção primária para garantir a segurança dos pacientes. A metodologia usada nesse projeto foi através de uma pesquisa de revisão de literatura bibliográfica, onde foram pesquisadas informações sobre o tema escolhido, assim levantado textos publicados em português, produzidos no Brasil, através de uma base de dados da SciELO, e LILACS, seleção dos textos foi feita por meios de levantamento na internet, como livros acadêmicos, artigos e revistas pertinentes ao assunto, com período entre 2015 e 2019. Evidenciou-se que o aumento da estrutura e dos serviços na assistência primária na saúde representa uma excelente estratégia para assegurar a sustentação dos sistemas de saúde em todo o mundo, proporcionando assistência dos usuários de maneira preventiva, contínua e integrada.

Descritores: Atenção Primária à Saúde; Serviços de Atendimento; Enfermagem, Segurança do Paciente; Cuidados de Enfermagem.

Abstract

The aim was to describe how nursing should act in primary health care to ensure patient safety, with the specific objectives of describing the concept of primary health care, understanding the importance of patient safety in primary health care and discussing how nursing must act in primary care to ensure patient safety. The methodology used in this project was through a bibliographic literature review research, where information on the chosen topic was researched, thus raising texts published in Portuguese, produced in Brazil, through a SciELO database, and LILACS, selection of the texts was made by means of survey on the internet, such as academic books, articles and magazines relevant to the subject, with a period between 2015 and 2019. It was evidenced that increasing the structure and services in primary health care represents an excellent strategy to ensure the support of health systems around the world, providing assistance to users in a preventive, continuous and integrated manner.

Descriptors: Primary Health Care; Answering Services; Nursing, Patient Safety; Nursing Care.

Resumen

El objetivo fue describir cómo debe actuar la enfermería en la atención primaria de salud para garantizar la seguridad del paciente, con los objetivos específicos de describir el concepto de atención primaria de salud, comprender la importancia de la seguridad del paciente en la atención primaria de salud y discutir cómo debe actuar la enfermería en la atención primaria para garantizar la seguridad del paciente. La metodología utilizada en este proyecto fue a través de una investigación de revisión de literatura bibliográfica, donde se investigó información sobre el tema elegido, levantando así textos publicados en portugués, producidos en Brasil, a través de una base de datos SciELO, y LILACS, la selección de los textos se hizo por medio de encuesta en internet, como libros académicos, artículos y revistas relevantes en el tema, con un período entre 2015 y 2019. Se evidenció que incrementar la estructura y los servicios en la atención primaria de salud representa una excelente estrategia para garantizar el apoyo de la salud sistemas en todo el mundo, brindando asistencia a los usuarios de manera preventiva, continua e integrada.

Descritores: Atención Primaria de Salud; Servicios de Contestadora; Enfermería; Seguridad del Paciente; Atención de Enfermería.

Silva EA, Voltarelli A, Gatto RS, França CE, José EAR, Souza MJL, Miranda C, Arruda AL health care networks. Thus, health professionals need to work together, with effective communication, responsibility and competence so that there is safe and quality care.

Primary Care is the population's first contact with the Unified Health System (SUS). It is the preferred gateway to the Health Network and integrates a set of actions. As part of a mechanism of singular gears, nurses have a fundamental role in assisting citizens, both within AB and in medium and high complexity.

Literature Review

Primary Health Care (PHC) is a set of individual, family and collective health actions that involve promotion, prevention, protection, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, harm reduction, palliative care and health surveillance, developed through of integrated care practices and qualified management, carried out with a multidisciplinary team and aimed at the population in a defined territory, for which the teams assume health responsibility¹.

PHC services should be the users' first point of contact with the health network, playing the role of coordinating care and ordering the actions and services provided by the network. In this scenario, nurses play a critical role in advancing PHC with evidence-based scientific knowledge and skills¹.

Introduction

Primary Health Care (PHC) is made up of Basic Health Units (UBS) and Primary Care Teams, while the intermediate level of care is in charge of the Mobile Emergency Care Service (SAMU), of the Emergency Care Units (UPA), and medium and high complexity care is provided in hospitals.

Patient safety is the absence of avoidable harm to the patient during the care process and the reduction of the risk of unnecessary harm associated with healthcare to an acceptable minimum¹.

In view of the above, the following guiding question arises, how should nursing work in primary care to ensure patient safety? Patient safety is effected from practices that prevent the occurrence of adverse health events, that is, events that cause some measurable harm to the individual.

Considering that the essence of nursing practice is care, professionals in this area must defend health policies that ensure access to quality treatment. Thus, nursing is directly or indirectly involved in the prevention of harm in patient care, being an important professional category to ensure safe care for the assisted population. The training of health professionals in the field of patient safety is a current need, considering the demands of the health care provided and the lack of knowledge of workers about the subject.

PHC is considered the care coordinator and the preferred gateway for users to the different points of care in

Figure 1. Primary Health Care and its attributes. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2019



The figure above represents a flowchart related to the attributes of primary health care, which can be essential or derivative. The essential attribute is attention at first contact, longitudinality, integrality and coordination, and the derived attributes are family and community orientation and cultural competence.

Thus, given the complexity of phenomena and health needs, nurses seek to qualify to meet these needs. There is a multiplicity of approaches in the literature related to the challenges experienced by professionals in PHC services, presenting elements such as error in communication, errors in knowledge, skills and abilities of professionals, diagnostic error and treatment error².

Themes such as error reporting, prevention of harm and risks to the patient and the mental health of professionals were also identified in this category. Reports about errors related to the team's work process are frequent in the literature, and communication is a recurring theme in publications. Primary health care is responsible for solving up to 80% of the population's health problems².

Fundamentally, primary health care (PHC) has among its attributions caring for individuals, not just treating exclusive pathologies or conditions. This department, which provides comprehensive, accessible, community-based care, can meet 80% to 90% of a user's health needs over the course of their lifetime³.

Silva EA, Voltarelli A, Gatto RS, França CE, José EAR, Souza MJL, Miranda C, Arruda AL pathologies and health promotion, solving possible problems and directing the most serious situations to levels of specialized care⁷.

The services provided include services aimed at prevention, health promotion and control of chronic diseases and palliative care. Therefore, it is crucial that health reaches all users³.

This department provides mindfulness as closely as possible to the everyday environment of users, communities and families. PHC is based on engagement with equity, social justice and recognition of the essential right to the highest attainable standards of health⁴.

According to article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every human being has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, medical care, housing, clothing and essential social services⁴.

The conceptualization of primary health care has been frequently redefined. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) it has developed a consistent definition based on three elements to ensure that users have access to complete services of cure, promotion, protection, prevention, rehabilitation and palliative care throughout their lives. Strategically prioritizing core system functions targeting individuals, families and the wider community as core components of integrated service delivery at all levels of care⁵.

Systematic action on major health determinants including environmental, economic, social behaviors and characteristics, as well as individuals, through public policies and interventions based on indicators in all areas⁵.

Empower users, families and communities to improve their health, as advocates for policies that provide and protect health and well-being, as help in the development of social and health services through their participation, and as caregivers of self-care themselves and other individuals⁶.

As defined by the WHO, primary care reflects the first level of contact with the system, responsible for bringing health care as close as possible to the places where people live and work⁶.

A PHC becomes strong when it has health facilities accessible to users who need care, offering a wide and updated set of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, being prepared to deal with the most prevalent health problems of the population under its responsibility and being qualified to coordinate the care of people who need to be directed to other levels of care in the health system⁶.

In a report carried out in Brazil, it was pointed out that the main tool to stimulate or increase the coverage of primary care has been the advancement of the Family Health Strategy (ESF). This model, compared to other forms of PHC organization existing in the country, presents better results regarding the growth of access to the health system and in indicators such as reduction of hospitalizations due to conditions sensitive to PHC, which are normally avoidable, and reduction of infant mortality, maternal⁶.

Fundamentally, primary care needs to function as a filter condition capable of organizing care and the flow of services in health networks, from the simplest to the most complex. As it is the entry point for people into the system, PHC aims to disseminate guidelines on the prevention of

Patient safety is the absence of avoidable harm to the patient during the care process and the reduction of the risk of unnecessary harm associated with health care to an acceptable minimum. In the early 2000s, patient safety became internationally recognized as a key proportion of quality in healthcare, but on the agenda of researchers. Thus, the World Health Organization (WHO) established the World Alliance for Patient Safety in 2004 as a program to facilitate, coordinate and accelerate improvements in patient safety at a global level^{4,7}.

It also seeks to identify and define priorities in the area of patient safety in various parts of the world, as well as to contribute to an international agenda for research in the field. The WHO defines patient safety as the maximum reduction in the risk of harm. This means reducing incidents⁸.

An incident is an event or circumstance that could have resulted, or has resulted, in unnecessary harm to the patient. They can have origins of intentional or unintentional acts. Quality health care, as well as safe, needs to be equitable, timely, effective, efficient and patient-centered⁸.

Studies on patient safety focus on hospital care, most likely because it presents more risks due to more complex care, with greater technological input. High costs can also explain the concentration of research in hospitals⁸.

However, it is important to note that patient safety problems do not only happen in hospitals, but also affect patients who receive primary care⁹.

The most common types of incidents were derived from errors in drug treatment, diagnosis, management and organization of the service. The most common contributing factor was communication, between professionals and patients, between health professionals from the same health unit and between different units⁹.

Organizational factors are also pointed out as contributors to the occurrence of incidents in PHC. Among them, the lack of supplies and medicines, professionals pressured to be more productive, failures in patient records and medical records and the fragile safety culture stand out⁹.

When talking about patient safety, one can get the idea that this is a well-defined issue, therefore, easy to analyze and propose changes in order to reduce or eliminate risks, which is not true¹⁰.

Health services must be organized under the premise that health professionals are liable to make mistakes, and it is up to the system to create mechanisms that reduce the risk of errors and, above all, prevent this error from reaching the patient^{8,10}.

Problems with patient safety do not only occur in hospitals, but also affect patients receiving primary care. The WHO recognized the progress in the implementation of PHC in global terms, however, it pointed out as a challenge the adoption of practices that allow offering continuous, humanized, quality and safe care¹⁰.

The Patient Safety Centers (NSP) must, above all, act as articulators and promoters of other instances that manage risks and quality actions, promoting



complementarity and synergies in this environment¹¹.

The multiprofessional team, composed at least by physician, pharmacist and nurse, is trained in concepts of quality improvement, patient safety and risk management tools in health services. Preferably, the NSP should be composed of members of the organization who know the work processes well and who have a leadership profile¹¹.

In Brazil, the Ministry of Health, in partnership with the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA), placed this topic on the priority agenda of the country's public and private health system, through the launch, in April 2013, of the National Safety Program of the Patient, where the patient safety protocols aim to assure the user better conditions of care, minimizing the risks to their health¹¹.

Figure 2. Patient safety protocols. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2019



The figure above demonstrates the basic protocols that need to be adopted to ensure patient safety in care. The protocol created aims to guide professionals in expanding patient safety in health services.

Also, the program developed Patient Safety Centers in health services, both public and private, and provides for the notification of adverse events related to patient care, as well as the public call of the productive health sector to present measures to increase the user safety in health services¹¹.

Nurses are part of multidisciplinary teams that make a difference when they are closer to the community. Being health professionals who approach, identify and create a relationship of empathy with the patient, regardless of their social conditions¹¹.

In Brazil, the practice of nursing is regulated and its professionals have their attributions specified in Decree No. 94,406, of June 8, 1987, which regulates Law No. 7,498, of June 25, 1986. This decree describes who they are nursing professionals and their attributions, but there is no dysfunction between the work of nurses in the scope of Primary Health Care (PHC) and in other levels of health care¹².

Work in PHC requires many skills from nursing professionals. Currently, there is a lack of specificity in nurses' attributions, which may have its origin in the work of the professionals themselves, who have not yet appropriated the purpose of their work in the daily life of the UBS, adding functions and tasks that are not their own¹².

The Basic Health Unit is the main gateway and

communication center with the entire Health Care Network. At UBS, it is possible to receive basic and free care in Pediatrics, Gynecology, General Practice, Nursing and Dentistry^{7,12}.

The main services offered are medical consultations, inhalations, injections, dressings, vaccines, collection of laboratory tests, dental treatment, referrals to specialties and provision of basic medication¹².

Nurses must be aware of their role in health units, being stimulated by the search for knowledge, both for themselves and for other team members, with regard to safe practices in health care¹².

In this way, strategies are suggested that can be used in the training of professionals to practice effective communication, advising on the current legislation on patient safety, adapting existing protocols to the reality of the FHS in the municipality. The Nurse's core competence is the health care of individuals, families and communities, being responsible for the planning, execution and management of all actions related to care¹².

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PHC services should be the first point of contact for users with the health network, playing the role of

coordinating care and ordering the actions and services provided by the network¹³.

In this scenario, nurses play a critical role in

Figure 3. Nursing performance. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2019



The figure above represents some topics that are essential for the nursing professional in their work, through which they perform nursing consultations, procedures, manage teams, guide patients, among other tasks that the profession requires. The nurse must act through a welcoming, humanized approach, as this professional is qualified to perform this service to users, seeking to approach, not only with patients, but also with their family, providing more tranquility, safety and comfort.¹³.

Methodology

The methodology used in this project was through a literature review research, where information on the

chosen topic was researched, thus raising texts published in Portuguese, produced in Brazil, through a database of the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) , and Latin American Literature in Health Sciences (LILACS).

The selection of texts was carried out by means of research on the internet, such as academic books, articles and magazines relevant to the subject, with a period between 2015 and 2019. The descriptors included in this search were Primary Care; Attendance; Nursing, Patient Safety.

Below is the flowchart showing the search results:

Figure 4. Research flowchart. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2019



Results and Discussion

In the chart below (Chart 1) the main articles for the elaboration of this work were selected. The articles were

separated according to the year of publication, study authorship and title.

Chart 1. Synopsis of the articles selected for the study. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2019

Year	Authorship	Title	Journal, book or website
2019	RAIMONDI et al.,	Patient safety culture in primary health care: analysis by professional categories.	Journal
2019	SILVA et al.,	Patient safety in primary care: nurses' conceptions of the family health strategy.	Journal
2018	PAIM, et al.	Unified Health System (SUS) at age 30.	Journal
2017	BRASIL.	Ministry of Education CAPES. Evaluation Report: Nursing.	Website
2016	VINCENT; AMALBERTI.	Safer Health Care Strategies for everyday care.	Book

Currently, the reorganization and strengthening of primary care takes place through the Family Health Strategy (ESF). This proposes the development, qualification and consolidation of primary care, as it favors the reorientation of the work process with greater potential to expand resolution and impact on the health situation of people and communities¹².

The nursing professional is an integral and indispensable part of the multiprofessional team and, even considering the complexity of the nurse's role in this scenario.

Patient safety is a fundamental element for the quality of health care, because it comprises actions that aim to manage and prevent risks that patients are exposed to. In this way, safety is configured as a strategic and continuous reduction of the harmful potential in the care process¹³.

In order to achieve so-called safe care, health institutions have sought to improve care processes, recognizing in the first instance the importance of establishing a patient safety culture in their procedure.

Safety culture is defined as the set of actions, competences and behaviors that define the commitment to safety management, supplying the punishment for the chance for the professional and the team to learn from failures and improve the health care provided¹².

In other words, it means acting with humanization, skill, responsibility and commitment to the safety and health of the patient, aiming to offer safe care, with integrality, resolution and reduction of risks and damages to patients, considering updating and obtaining knowledge to have a fundamental care¹³.

To implement the patient safety culture, it is necessary to understand beliefs, values and norms about

what the institution considers as important, which actions and behaviors aimed at patient safety are expected and encouraged, in addition to being monitored. With this in place, the implementation of a positive culture for patient safety in the health institution tends to favor safe and quality care¹⁴.

Regarding patient safety, there seem to be more incidents and adverse events in the hospital context. However, these can also occur at other levels of health care, such as in PHC¹⁴.

Final Considerations

It was evident that the increase in the structure and services in primary health care represent an excellent strategy to ensure the support of health systems around the world, providing assistance to users in a preventive, continuous and integrated manner.

It is concluded that patient safety is essential to reduce risks and to minimize damage to the health of users who seek care in PHC. Therefore, the promotion of constant education actions for all teams, focusing on safe and quality care tends to be one of the main strategies of nursing.

The results of this study can contribute through discussions between managers and health professionals with the purpose of detecting the needs and limitations to ensure safety in a positive way in all teams and professional categories of PHC. The research shows the importance of new studies on the theme. Reflections can contribute to nursing care with a view to patient safety, qualifying both the work of nurses extended to the multiprofessional team in health care in an expanded way.

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