

ORIGINAL PAPER

Nurse Caring Behaviors Following Implementation of a Relationship Centered Care Professional Practice Model

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Abstract

Background: There has been considerable attention to nurse caring in the literature, and recent attention has been focused on the importance of caring not only to patient outcomes, but also to nurse outcomes such as the importance nurses place on caring within their professional role.

Aims: The purpose of this study was to describe nurses' perceptions of their own caring behaviors six months after implementation of a new Relationship Centered Care Professional Practice Model.

Methodology: A descriptive design was used to survey all 1500 clinical nurses providing care in a large academic medical center. The Caring Behavior Inventory was used, and background data were collected to describe the sample.

Results: Five hundred thirty eight nurses completed the survey, for a response rate of 35.9%. Participants had high perceptions of caring behaviors in all of the assessed areas: assurance of human presence, knowledge and skill, respectful deference to others, and positive connectiveness.

Conclusions: Results of this study are consistent with prior research on nurses' perceptions of caring. As in prior research the more observable aspects of care received the higher ratings. Several factors may have contributed to the results of high scores on caring behaviors, including the implementation of a professional practice model that specifically targeted key components of caring in the provision of direct patient care. Further, throughout the implementation of the professional practice model there was considerable attention paid to continuing education targeted toward aspects of caring, provided both for nurse leaders and clinical nurses.

Key words: Caring, nurses, relationship centered care, professional practice model