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October 1998

Title: A survey study of nurses' attitudes towards the Patients' Charter in Hong Kong

ABSTRACT

The Patients' Charter had been implemented in Hong Kong since 1993. It consisted of 11 patients' rights and 6 patients' responsibilities. The success of the introduction of the Patients' Charter was greatly depended on the staff's knowledge and acceptance on Patients' Charter. Attitudes of nurses were essential in accepting Patients, Charter in their practice. Wortman, Loftus and Marshall (1992) said that attitude were thoughts and feeling that encourage one to act as if one liked or disliked something. Therefore, the nurses' attitudes towards the Patients' Charter should be examined. A quantitative and descriptive research was used to investigate about nurses' knowledge and their degree of acceptance of the Patients' Charter. The instrument was a self-designed questionnaire in question forms by adopting the idea and the content of a booklet published by Hospital Authority in 1993 to introduce the Patients' Charter to the staff. A pilot study was carried out in December 1998, the data was used for the internal consistency reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient alpha for Section I and II were 0.71 and 0.77 respectively. The 50 sets of questionnaires were distributed by me in Prince of Wales Hospital. 42 sets of the questionnaires were returned. The finding showed the nurse respondents were knowledgeable and acceptance to the Patients' Charter. Though the attitudes between RN, NO, NS and WM were different, their attitudes were good towards Patients' Charter. But the finding was closely related to the literature review that nursing leader had the most progressive attitudes regarding autonomy and patients' rights (Pankratz and Pankratz, 1974). Besides, the finding also indicated that training courses of seminars could enhance the nurses' knowledge and attitudes to accept Patients' Charter. However, this result findings were difficult to generalize to all hospitals/institutions of Hospital Authority as the study only carried out in Prince of Wales Hospital due to limited resources. Yet, this study could serve as a foundation for future study in relation with Patients' Charter. Since this study demonstrated the attitudes of the nurses were good towards Patients' Charter. As patient advocacy, nursing was to promote and defend patients' rights (Segesten and Fagring, 1996). Respectively, this study could also treat as preliminary information for the patient advocacy in Hong Kong.