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Guest Editorial

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Guest Editorial



Scope of forensic nursing

Nurses in their day to day care in various settings, take care of abused children, elderly who are abused, women who experience domestic violence, people with catastrophic accidents, selfinflicted injuries, or suicides, etc. These incidents need to be reported to a law enforcement agency for the investigation. Nurses require special skills for assessing and providing care to the patients in legal custody. Crime and violence impact the daily lives of the citizens, throughout the world. Violence, crime, and its associated trauma are the concerns of health care professionals, lawyers, magistrates, sociologists, psychologists, social workers, forensic, and political scientists, advocates, as well as criminal justice agencies. Without collaborating with each other, no one from any of these disciplines can function. Forensic nursing is a pioneering and budding nursing speciality that seeks to address health care issues that have a medico-legal component. Forensic nursing has been practiced informally by nurses in various areas for many years, but only recently it has been recognized lawfully, in response to an increasing level of complexity in detecting its distinctive body of knowledge. Forensic nursing is one of the nursing specialties that provide services to a variety of patient populations, who have experienced violence, sudden, or unexpected death, and motor vehicle collisions, etc. Forensic nurses have a duty to possess knowledge and skill in dealing with both offenders and victims. She should be equipped with working from the basic community set up to secure prisons. First forensic nurse Lynch V A mentioned in an interview that, the two major responsibilities of a forensic nurse are identification of trauma and recovery of specimens. (Advanced health care network for nurses, 2013) This signifies the need for creating awareness and developing competence among nurses in this thrust areas. Forensic nursing is a fairly new concept in India. Hence, current emphasis is on orientating medical professionals, nursing professionals, investigating officials, judiciary, administrative, and political leaders to the concept and benefits of forensic science. Though, a structured diploma program in forensic nursing is put forward by Indian Nursing Council, to train the nurses, lack of knowledge about this role and limited resources to run the program are the lacunae in this field. Enlightening the nurses regarding the scope of forensic nursing and their responsibilities will aid to overcome this. There is an urgent need to include forensic nursing concepts in the nursing curriculum, so that the students get oriented to these concepts, which will help them to deal with the legal issues involved in client care. Nurses, who have completed their diplomas or degrees, should also be given special training and certificate courses should be introduced at individual nursing school or nursing college level, to bring the Indian nurses at par with the nurses of

developed countries in the field of forensic nursing. Workshops and training programs for nursing faculty with hands on experience focusing on various aspects of forensic nursing will aid in addressing this concern. It will also motivate the nurses to perform their role in forensic set up. Efforts need to be taken, so that forensic nursing will gradually be introduced across India.

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