

The Role of Emergency Nursing in Critical Care

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DESCRIPTION

Emergency nursing is a dynamic and vital field within the healthcare industry. These skilled professionals are on the front lines of patient care, often serving as the first point of contact for individuals experiencing acute medical conditions or traumatic injuries. While emergency nurses play a critical role in stabilizing and initiating treatment for patients in the emergency department, their contributions extend beyond these initial moments. In this article, we will explore the multifaceted role of emergency nursing in critical care settings, highlighting the diverse skills and responsibilities required for this demanding profession.

The initial assessment: First responders in the hospital

Emergency nurses are the initial point of contact for patients seeking immediate medical attention. They must possess rapid assessment skills to quickly and accurately triage patients based on the severity of their condition. This initial assessment determines the order in which patients receive care, ensuring that those with life-threatening conditions are prioritized. Effective triage is a significant component of emergency nursing, as it can mean the difference between life and death in critical care situations.

Stabilization and intervention

Once the initial assessment is complete, emergency nurses are responsible for stabilizing patients and initiating necessary interventions. They must be well-versed in a wide range of medical procedures, from administering medications and fluids to performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation and assisting with intubation. These actions are essential for patients experiencing cardiac arrests, severe trauma, respiratory distress, and other critical conditions.

Multitasking and decision-making under pressure

The emergency department is often a chaotic environment with a constant influx of patients and a wide variety of medical conditions.

Emergency nurses must excel in multitasking and making quick, informed decisions under pressure. They collaborate closely with physicians, other healthcare providers, and support staff to ensure the efficient delivery of care. This ability to function effectively in high-stress situations is a hallmark of the emergency nursing profession.

Patient advocacy and communication

Nurses must not only communicate with the healthcare team but also with patients and their families. They provide critical information, explain procedures and treatment plans, and offer emotional support during moments of crisis. Patient advocacy is another essential aspect of their role. They ensure that patients receive the appropriate care and advocate for their needs, particularly in cases where patients may not be able to communicate their preferences or concerns.

Education and preventive care

Emergency nurses are not only focused on immediate care but also on education and preventive measures. They educate patients on managing chronic conditions, recognizing warning signs, and adopting healthier lifestyles. Additionally, they play a role in injury prevention by offering guidance on safety measures and community health initiatives.

Resource management and emergency preparedness

In the dynamic world of emergency care, resource management is significant. Emergency nurses must efficiently allocate resources such as medical equipment, medications, and staff to address the varying needs of patients. Furthermore, they contribute to emergency preparedness efforts by participating in disaster drills and ensuring the emergency department is well-equipped to handle mass casualties or catastrophic events.

Continual learning and professional development

The field of healthcare is continually evolving, and emergency nurses must stay current with the latest medical advancements, protocols, and technologies. Many emergency nurses pursue

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advanced certifications, such as Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN) or Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC), to enhance their knowledge and skills. Professional development is not just encouraged; it is essential for maintaining high standards of care in critical situations.

The emotional toll of emergency nursing

While emergency nurses are adept at providing compassionate care, the nature of their work can take an emotional toll. They frequently encounter traumatic situations, including accidents, violence, and life-threatening illnesses. Managing their emotional well-being and seeking support when needed is significant for sustaining a long and fulfilling career in emergency nursing.

CONCLUSION

Emergency nursing is an indispensable component of critical care within the healthcare system. These dedicated professionals are the first responders within the hospital, providing immediate assessment, stabilization, and interventions for patients in critical conditions. They excel in multitasking, making rapid decisions under pressure, and advocating for patients' needs. Emergency nurses also engage in preventive care, resource management, and ongoing professional development to deliver the highest level of care. Despite the emotional challenges they face, their commitment to saving lives and improving patient outcomes makes emergency nursing a truly heroic profession in the world of healthcare.