
Challenges and Future Directions

A wealth of literature has been written and a number of studies have been conducted on the topic of individualised nursing care from different perspectives. In the future, it is possible to synthesise the knowledge and direct research and theoretical work on several aspects of the topic. For example, based on the existing knowledge, it is possible to collect the steps in theory generation regarding the construct towards the middle range theory of individualised care and factors related. Conceptual and empirical work needs to be directed on the examination of the concepts associated with the individualised care, to reveal the common underlying contents and to determine the differing contents.

The Individualised Care Scale has proven validity and reliability and plenty of evidence exists about its usability and sensitivity in different cultural contexts. Future research should focus on intervention studies using individualised care as an outcome of differing nursing interventions. The role of the patient or client has changed dramatically in the 2010s healthcare. Therefore, it is useful to study the concept of individualised care in association with health promotion, patient education and counselling and empowerment. Selfcare, self-management and activities of individuals have received much stronger recognition in the healthcare systems. How we look at individual patients has dramatically changed since the 1990s.

The Individualised Care Scale was developed for the measurement of first, patients' and second, nurses' perceptions about the support and maintenance of individualised nursing care in the in-patient care settings. Future research activities may be focused on the development of an instrument for out-patient care settings, and a more sensitive instrument to be used in the care setting of older people. Such instruments need to focus on revealing the slight nuances in deeper perceptions of individuality, especially focusing on patient's personal life situation. Future research would also show whether it is necessary to weight the personal life situation subscale, as it has turned to provide the most explanatory power for explaining individuality in care provided. The Individualised Care Scale was developed starting in the 1990s and it would be beneficial to analyse the content in the future, whether the content of the concept has changed over time. Also, it would be of value to include other health and social care professionals as samples while measuring the individualised patient care.

The importance and demand for individualised care has risen in the care delivery and nursing leadership and management. This highlights the new coming and importance of value-based healthcare systems, services and patient care. In addition to ethical elements of care, evidence-based healthcare and practices calls for the research on perceptions of patients, but especially the outcomes of nursing care and, thus, intervention studies. Some evidence exists in the research literature about the important role of the physical environment, but also social and symbolic environment, the organizational context, leadership and management. Therefore, more research on these issues in relation to perceptions of individualised care needs to be initiated. Only a few examples exist pointing out that economical issues may have a role in the delivery of individualised patient care, but also pointing out possible savings for the society.