

TELENURSING: A VISION IN INDIA

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Introduction:

“Technology doesnot drive change- it enables change”

Telenursing refers to the use of telecommunication and information technology in the provision of nursing services whenever a large physical distance exists between patient and nurse, or between any number of nurses. As a field, it is part of telehealth, and has many points of contacts with other medical and non-medical applications, such as telediagnosis, teleconsultation, telemonitoring, etc

Currently, India is facing a shortage of more than million nurses, the nurse-per-bed ratio in India is 0.87 as against the world average of 1.2 nurses-per-bed (WHO).This scenario needs to be rectified. To meet the patient’s need, many health care agencies are looking for innovative ways to care for a large number of patients.

With over 70 per cent of India’s population living in the villages and more than 75 per cent of the doctors are in the cities, it was pointed out that tele-medicine could emerge as a feasible bridge to minimize the rural-urban health divide in the country. It was stated that tele-medicine, if used effectively in nursing profession, had the potential to help improve the efficiency of both nurses and doctors as they would be able to treat more patients.

Telenursing is achieving a large rate of growth in many countries, due to several factors: the preoccupation in driving down the costs of health care, an increase in the number of aging and chronically ill population, and the increase

in coverage of health care to distant, rural, small or sparsely populated regions.

Meaning :

Tele-nursing is the use of telecommunication technology to provide nursing practice at a distance. This can be something as simple as faxing medical records to the more complex delivery of nursing care to patients' home through the use of cameras and computer technologies.

Definition:

It is defined as subset of telehealth in which its main focus is on profession’s practice (i.e. Nursing)

- American Nurses Association

Significance:

- Tele-nursing has also been used as a tool in home nursing. It is especially useful in cases of elderly and chronically ill patients who need to be nursed at home and are remotely located.
- Tele-nursing can also provide opportunities for patient education, professional consultations, examination of test results and assisting physicians in implementation of medical treatment protocols.
- Today nurses can offer consultation and comfort to patients whether they are in the same city or thousands of kilometers away. Over the telephone, nurses can calm an anxious patient.
- Tele-nursing, nurses manage the demand for health services

- Telephones also allow nurses to take their services out into the community through mobile health teams.
- Telehealth technology offers increase in productivity for nurses by reducing the travel time and increasing the daily census
- Tele-nursing is a cost-effective strategy for making health care accessible to the whole nation with dispersed or rural population
- Nurses also use state-of-the-art video conferencing equipment as a tool for the assessment and treatment of patients.
- Tele-Nursing removes the barriers to health care for people living in remote villages or where adequate health services are not available.
- Nurses are able to spend more time on direct patient care rather than indirect care, resulting in better use of their time and education

Applications of Telenursing:

- ❖ **Home care** :Patients who are immobilized, or live in remote or difficult to reach places, citizens who have chronic ailments, may stay at home and be "visited" and assisted regularly by a nurse via videoconferencing, internet or videophone. In normal home health care, one nurse is able to visit up to 5-7 patients per day. Using telenursing, one nurse can “visit” 12-16 patients in the same amount of time.
- ❖ **Telephone triage** :Telephone triage involves ranking clients' health problems according to

their urgency, educating and advising clients, and making safe, effective, and appropriate dispositions all by telephone. Nurses may also direct clients to obtain a second medical opinion, or advise them where to find relevant, current health information. They might counsel or perform crisis intervention for a threatened suicide.

❖ **Counseling** : counsel high risk population

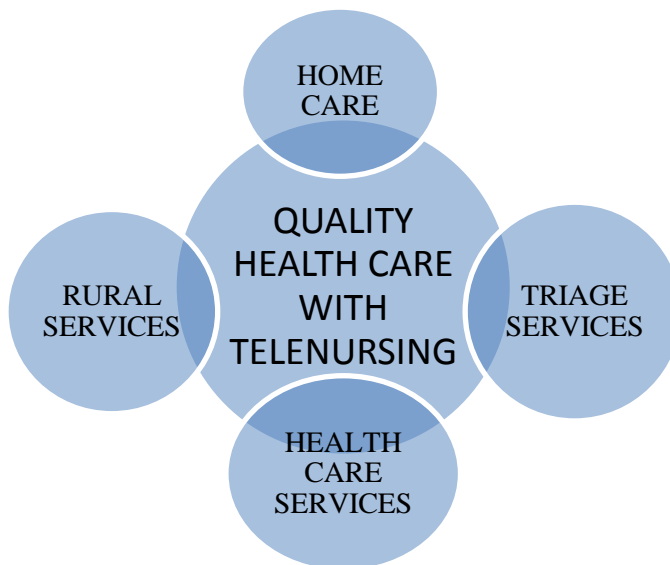
❖ **Communication:** Technology now also enables nurses to deliver health care in rural and remote locations, and areas without health care services.

❖ **Nursing education:** Nursing education through two way audio video conferencing.

Implications for student learners:

Telenursing is becoming new reality in nursing. Nurses in telehealth care, use nursing care plan to provide care, but they use internet, computer, digital

assessment tools, and telemonitoring equipments. Inclusion of Telenursing in nursing curriculum may enhance the use art of technology with internet, telephonic services in providing health care rather than direct care.



Quality Care and Telenursing Model

Issues in telenursing

- No face to face contact
- Visualization work - build a mental picture of the caller during triage
- Getting simulated calls

Conclusion :

According to the experts, telenursing will help cushion the impending shortage of trained nurses and also ensure a continuous flow of nursing staff who could also treat and nurse more number of patients at a given point of time with the assistance of tele-medicine and tele-nursing technology. Leadership and collaboration among international nurses are necessary to outline the uses of Telehealth and telehealth technologies to provide nursing care in an interdisciplinary manner to patients, regardless of time, staffing and geographic boundaries. Continuous cycles of usability evaluation, modification of software issues, followed by repeated usability analyses are needed in order to ensure system efficiency and

effectiveness over time as the workflow and business environment continue to evolve.

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