

Exploration on the Training of Geriatric Nursing Team under the Background of the Integration of Medical and Elderly Care Services

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Abstract: At present, China has entered an aging society, and there is an urgent need for a large number of high-quality geriatric nursing professionals. However, the existing geriatric nursing team is difficult to meet the actual needs both in terms of quality and quantity. In this regard, under the background of the integration of medical and elderly care services, colleges and universities should strengthen the training of geriatric nursing talents. This paper conducts an in-depth analysis on the training of geriatric nursing teams under the background of the integration of medical and elderly care services, aiming to provide some references for promoting the reform of geriatric nursing talent training in colleges and universities and improving the level of geriatric nursing services in China.

Keywords: Integration of medical and elderly care services; Geriatric nursing; Talent training

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1. Introduction

According to the 2024 National Report on the Development of Elderly Undertakings released by the National Bureau of Statistics, by the end of 2024, the number of elderly people aged 60 and above in China was 310.31 million, accounting for 22% of the total population; the number of elderly people aged 65 and above was 220.23 million, accounting for 16% of the total population^[1]. It can be seen that the aging trend of China's population is very severe, and there is an urgent need for a large number of professional geriatric nursing talents. Under the background of the integration of medical and elderly care services, geriatric nursing work has become more diversified. It is no longer limited to traditional medical care and daily living care, but has developed towards rehabilitation nursing, psychological counseling, preventive health care and other directions. This also puts forward higher requirements for the professional quality and comprehensive ability of geriatric nursing staff. As an important base for talent training in China, colleges and universities should keep up with the trend of the times, actively adapt to the needs of

social development, and constantly adjust and optimize the training program for geriatric nursing talents, so as to improve the quality of talent training, enable them to become geriatric nursing talents that meet the needs of social development, and thus lay a solid foundation for their future employment and development^[2].

2. Overview of the integration of medical and elderly care services

2.1. Connotation

The integration of medical and elderly care services is an innovative elderly care model, which mainly refers to the integration of medical resources and elderly care resources to provide higher-quality elderly care services for the elderly. This elderly care model not only focuses on the daily life care of the elderly but also attaches importance to their needs in terms of mental health, disease prevention, rehabilitation care and more. Its ultimate goal is to improve the quality and level of life of the elderly.

2.2. Current development status of the integration of medical and elderly care services in China

In 2013, the State Council issued the Several Opinions on Accelerating the Development of the Elderly Care Service Industry, and the concept of “integration of medical and elderly care services” was put forward for the first time. In 2015, the General Office of the State Council issued the National Plan for the Layout of the Medical and Health Service System (2015–2020), which formally defined the concept of “integration of medical and elderly care services” for the first time. Since then, relevant policies have been introduced one after another, laying a solid foundation for the development of the integration of medical and elderly care services. In 2025, the National Health Commission will include the “integration of medical and elderly care services” in the core indicators of the 14th Five-Year Plan for Healthy Aging, requiring the total number of institutions integrating medical and elderly care services to exceed 9,000 and the coverage rate of such services to reach 90%.

According to the 2025–2030, in-depth research on the Industry of Integration of Medical and Elderly Care Services and Forecast Report on Current Development Status and Trends released by ZYPH Industry Research Institute, the market scale of China’s integration of medical and elderly care services has exceeded 1.8 trillion yuan, an increase of 22% compared with 2024. It is expected that by 2030, the market scale will exceed 3.8 trillion yuan. Against this background, there is an urgent need for a large number of high-quality professionals in elderly care nursing^[3].

3. Challenges faced in the cultivation of geriatric nursing professionals in colleges and universities

The cultivation of geriatric nursing professionals in colleges and universities was confronted with numerous challenges. This paper provides a brief analysis from the following aspects.

3.1. Social cognition bias and low quality of student sources

Affected by traditional concepts, there exists a certain degree of cognitive bias towards the geriatric nursing profession in society. The profession is perceived as having low social status, mainly involving “serving others”, with heavy workload and low income^[4]. Such outdated notions lead many parents and students to disapprove of the nursing industry and be unwilling to choose it. In addition, society lacks sufficient understanding and attention

to geriatric nursing, unilaterally believing that it only involves taking care of the daily life of the elderly. This also results in low social recognition of the geriatric nursing major, further affecting the quality of student sources.

3.2. Unsound curriculum design and disconnection from the needs of the integration of medical and elderly care services

Under the model of integrating medical and elderly care services, higher requirements are placed on students' professional literacy and comprehensive abilities^[5]. However, the curriculum design of geriatric nursing in some colleges and universities is currently unsound. On one hand, excessive emphasis is placed on the imparting of theoretical knowledge while neglecting the cultivation of students' practical abilities, making it difficult for them to meet the needs of the integrated medical and elderly care service model. On the other hand, the curriculum content is disconnected from the actual needs of the integration of medical and elderly care. It lacks systematic teaching on rehabilitation nursing, mental health care for the elderly, disease prevention, and other related aspects. This makes it hard for graduates to adapt to the development needs of the industry, thus hindering their future employment and career development.

3.3. Weak teaching staff and lack of practical experience

Geriatric nursing is a highly practical discipline, which requires teachers to possess strong practical capabilities and rich clinical nursing experience^[6]. However, the teaching staff of the geriatric nursing major in some colleges and universities is relatively weak, with insufficient clinical nursing experience and inadequate understanding of the integrated medical and elderly care service model. In the teaching process, excessive focus is often placed on the teaching of theoretical knowledge, while the cultivation of students' practical abilities and problem-solving skills was ignored.

Besides, the structure of the teaching staff is irrational, with a lack of interdisciplinary backgrounds, making it difficult to meet the demand for interdisciplinary and compound talents in teaching.

3.4. Insufficient practical teaching resources, affecting the improvement of students' core competitiveness

Practical teaching is an important measure to cultivate students' practical abilities and a key link in improving the quality of geriatric nursing professionals^[7]. Nevertheless, the practical teaching of the geriatric nursing major in some colleges and universities is faced with the predicament of insufficient resources, which seriously affects the improvement of students' practical abilities. Some colleges and universities have outdated and insufficient practical teaching equipment, lack modern nursing simulation devices and advanced teaching tools, and thus cannot meet the needs of students for practical training.

4. The innovative paths for cultivating geriatric nursing talents in colleges and universities under the background of the integration of medical and elderly care services

4.1. Optimizing the curriculum system to highlight the characteristics of the integration of medical and elderly care services

4.1.1. Constructing a modular curriculum system

To more effectively improve the quality of geriatric nursing talent cultivation, colleges and universities can, in light

of the needs of the integration of medical and elderly care services and based on the competency requirements of geriatric nursing positions, construct a modular curriculum system^[8].

Each module includes corresponding courses, with clear course objectives and contents, while ensuring close connection between different courses. For instance, a rehabilitation nursing module was set up, which included multiple courses such as Basic Medicine and Human Function Assessment, Rehabilitation Technology and Functional Reconstruction, and the Use of Rehabilitation Equipment.

The construction of a modular curriculum system not only meets the needs of the integration of medical and elderly care services, more effectively cultivates students' professional literacy and comprehensive abilities, but also lays a solid foundation for their future employment and development.

4.1.2. Increasing the proportion of practical courses

Currently, the cultivation of students' practical abilities has received widespread attention and emphasis^[9]. In this regard, colleges and universities should arrange practical courses in a reasonable manner, appropriately increase the proportion of practical courses, and ensure that students have sufficient time to learn practical knowledge and skills. At the same time, they should keep pace with the times, continuously optimize the content of practical teaching to ensure its advanced nature and practicality, thereby more effectively cultivating students' clinical nursing abilities.

4.1.3. Integrating interdisciplinary knowledge

Geriatric nursing involves knowledge from multiple disciplines such as psychology, medicine, and management^[10]. Therefore, under the background of the integration of medical and elderly care services, colleges and universities should also integrate interdisciplinary knowledge into the curriculum design. This not only broadens students' horizons and improves their knowledge system, but also promotes the development of their interdisciplinary thinking.

4.2. Strengthen practical teaching to cultivate students' practical abilities

Currently, students' practical abilities have become the core criterion for enterprises to evaluate talents^[11]. In this context, against the backdrop of the integration of medical and elderly care services, colleges and universities as well as teachers should strengthen practical teaching. Through various methods and means, they should cultivate students' practical abilities, laying a foundation for their all-round development in the future.

4.2.1. Improve the construction of practical bases

Colleges and universities can carry out in-depth cooperation with medical institutions, enterprises, nursing homes and other units. By integrating resources from all parties, they can jointly establish comprehensive, well-equipped, stable and high-quality practical teaching bases. These bases serve as sufficient opportunities and platforms for students' practical training^[12]. Meanwhile, colleges and universities can sign cooperation agreements with all parties involved to clarify the rights and obligations of each party and scientifically define their respective scope of responsibilities. This will better realize resource sharing and complementary advantages among all parties.

4.2.2. Strengthen the management of practical teaching

Colleges and universities should establish and improve the management system for practical teaching, and

conduct regular evaluations of the effectiveness of practical teaching ^[13]. At the same time, in accordance with the requirements of the integration of medical and elderly care services and combined with the actual situation of the institutions, they should formulate scientific and reasonable practical teaching syllabuses, internship plans, assessment standards and other contents. By clarifying the responsibilities of teachers, they can ensure the standardization of practical teaching, thereby cultivating students' practical abilities more effectively. In addition, they should also conduct comprehensive inspections and evaluations of practical bases on a regular basis, promptly identify existing problems, and provide feedback and solutions to continuously improve the effectiveness of practical teaching.

4.2.3. Reform the practical teaching model

Against the backdrop of the integration of medical and elderly care services, the traditional practical teaching model can hardly meet the needs of students' development ^[14]. In response to this, it is necessary to reform and optimize it. In specific practice, teachers can adopt a variety of teaching methods such as case teaching, situational simulation, and project-based teaching. These methods aim to stimulate students' interest in learning, arouse their enthusiasm and initiative, and thus effectively cultivate their practical abilities.

4.3. Strengthen the development of teaching staff and enhance the overall quality of teachers

4.3.1. Intensify teacher training

Colleges and universities can regularly organize special training programs on geriatric nursing for teachers, so as to continuously update their knowledge systems and broaden their horizons ^[15]. At the same time, teachers can be encouraged to participate in domestic and international academic exchange activities in geriatric nursing to keep abreast of the industry's development trends and latest dynamics. In addition, more efforts should be made to cultivate "dual-qualified" teachers, with teachers have both teaching expertise and professional practical experience. Teachers should be regularly sent to elderly care institutions that integrate medical and elderly care services to engage in clinical practice, enrich their practical experience, and lay a foundation for improving the quality of professional teaching in the future.

4.3.2. Improve talent introduction

Colleges and universities should formulate talent introduction plans and actively recruit geriatric nursing talents who possess both rich practical experience and high academic qualifications to work as teachers. This measure aims to optimize the structure of the teaching staff and enhance the overall teaching quality.

4.3.3. Optimize incentive mechanisms

Colleges and universities should also improve incentive mechanisms for teachers to stimulate their work enthusiasm and lay a foundation for enhancing the quality of geriatric nursing talent cultivation. Firstly, a scientific and reasonable performance appraisal system should be established, which incorporates teachers' scientific research achievements, teaching quality, and other relevant indicators. This ensures that the appraisal results can fully reflect teachers' work performance and comprehensive capabilities. Secondly, a differentiated salary system should be implemented based on the appraisal results. Teachers who achieve excellent appraisal results should be provided with higher salaries and more promotion opportunities.

4.4. Strengthen vocational education to support students' future development

4.4.1. Actively carry out career planning education

Colleges and universities should fully recognize the importance of career planning education and integrate it into the entire process of talent cultivation. This helps students understand the development prospects and future directions of the geriatric nursing major, formulate scientific and reasonable academic plans and learning goals, strengthen their cognitive understanding of the major, and help them establish correct ideological concepts.

4.4.2. Enhance professional ethics education

Colleges and universities should also strengthen professional ethics education and integrate it into students' daily teaching and campus life. Through classroom teaching, social practice, campus activities, and other approaches, students' professional literacy can be improved, and their craftsmanship spirit and sense of responsibility can be cultivated, laying a solid foundation for their all-round development in the future.

4.4.3. Establish an employment tracking mechanism

Colleges and universities should maintain stable communication with the enterprises where students intern and the units where they are employed, and on this basis, establish a tracking mechanism for students' internship and employment. By collecting opinions and evaluations of students from internship and employment units, colleges and universities can understand students' performance during internships and employment. Based on this information, they can adjust teaching content and optimize talent cultivation programs, thereby laying a foundation for improving the quality of talent cultivation.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, against the backdrop of the integration of medical and elderly care services, traditional elderly care professionals can hardly meet the needs of industrial development. In response to this, as important bases for high-quality talent cultivation in China, colleges and universities should keep up with the trend of the times, reform and optimize the traditional training model for elderly care professionals, and continuously improve the quality of elderly care talent cultivation through various methods and means, so as to provide solid talent support for the elderly care cause under the integration of medical and elderly care model.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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