

Analysis of the Current Situation of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”

Xuemei Zeng*

Siping First People’s Hospital, Siping 136000, Jilin Province, China

*Corresponding author: Xuemei Zeng, A13304341487@126.com

Copyright: © 2024 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: In the era of “Internet Plus,” technologies like big data, the Internet of Things, and cloud computing have revitalized nursing services in China, leading to the emergence of the “Internet Plus Nursing Services” model. This model facilitates on-site nursing care for discharged patients and special groups with mobility challenges, further advancing the construction of a Healthy China and enabling more people to access high-quality and continuous nursing services. Governments at all levels should actively improve the systems related to “Internet Plus Nursing Services” and simplify the appointment and operation processes. It is also essential to standardize the medical waste disposal process to ensure the quality of on-site nursing services, protect the legitimate rights and interests of both caregivers and patients and safeguard patient privacy and security. Additionally, building a robust “Internet Plus” platform to promote “online appointment of nurses” services, integrate nursing resources, and foster the healthy development of “Internet Plus Nursing Services” is crucial.

Keywords: “Internet plus nursing service”; Connotation interpretation; Development status; Development path

Online publication: August 9, 2024

1. Introduction

On February 12, 2019, the National Health Commission issued the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” Pilot Work Plan. This plan proposed providing door-to-door nursing services for discharged patients, disabled elderly individuals, and other special groups. It defined the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model and designated Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Guangdong as pilot provinces to innovate nursing service models and further improve the quality of nursing services. Medical insurance departments and hospitals at all levels should base their efforts on regional nursing resources, encourage professional nurses to actively register for online appointment services, and standardize the appointment, service, and charging standards of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service.” They should meet the nursing service needs of special groups, use platforms like WeChat official accounts, Weibo, and Tiktok to promote the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model, ensure patient privacy, and further enhance the service quality of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service,” thereby advancing the strategic construction of a healthy China.

2. Interpretation of the connotation of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model

“Internet Plus Nursing Service” refers to medical institutions providing on-site nursing service appointments through the Internet, the Internet of Things, cloud computing, big data, and other information technologies. Professional registered nurses offer on-site nursing, health consultation, nursing guidance, and other services to special groups such as discharged patients, the disabled elderly, and the disabled. This model aims to meet the diverse and multi-level health needs of the public and support the implementation of the Healthy China strategy ^[1].

Medical institutions must apply to the local health administrative department and obtain approval before offering “Internet Plus Nursing Services.” Nurses selected for this service should have at least 5 years of clinical nursing experience and must be free of any illegal or negative practice records ^[2]. Regional medical and health administrative departments are also responsible for organizing online nurse training and providing pre-job training for nurses applying for on-site nursing services. This training includes commonly used clinical nursing projects, specialized nursing, health guidance, and other services to meet the nursing needs of different groups, actively respond to the aging population, and improve the quality of nursing services.

3. Current situation of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”

3.1. Inadequate appointment and management system for on-site nursing services

China’s “Internet Plus Nursing Service” is still in the developmental stage. The online appointment platforms for nurses are not yet unified, and the appointment process is relatively complex, causing significant difficulties for patients and their families when booking appointments online. Moreover, these platforms are often unstable, leading to a poor user experience for both patients and nurses. The medical and health administrative departments have not adequately supervised the online nursing appointment platforms, including the service standards, charging standards, and service evaluations of registered nurses. There is a lack of clear standards and procedures for nurses’ home services, medical waste treatment methods, and oversight of the medical institutions providing these services, which hampers the development of “Internet Plus Nursing Services” ^[3].

3.2. Inadequate patient safety system

Home nursing services have certain peculiarities. The locations and service recipients are not fixed, and many nurses are women, making them vulnerable to security threats from patients or their families in case of disputes. This is a significant factor affecting nurses’ willingness to participate in the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” project ^[4]. Additionally, online nurses only provide medical technology services and do not dispense medications or medical consumables. If a patient experiences adverse drug reactions, it is challenging to provide effective first aid, posing a potential threat to patient safety. The “Internet Plus Nursing Service” platform also lacks proper management of nurses’ and patients’ information security, which can lead to the disclosure of personal information, causing dissatisfaction among patients and their families and affecting their satisfaction with the service.

3.3. Improper treatment of medical waste

Nurses generate medical waste during on-site nursing services, such as medicine bottles, syringes used for injections, replaced urine tubes, and gauze. However, neither medical institutions nor the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” platform has standardized the medical waste treatment process or established emergency plans. If medical waste is mixed with domestic waste, it can lead to bacterial infections or public health incidents ^[5]. For example, many nurses providing online appointment services do not properly dispose of medical waste after providing on-site services, nor do they inform patients and their families of the correct disposal methods. Due to a lack of basic medical knowledge, patients and their families may treat medical waste as household waste,

which can lead to contamination.

3.4. Lack of trust in “Internet Plus Nursing Services”

Many elderly patients do not understand “Internet Plus Nursing Services” and lack trust in the professional abilities of nurses providing home services. They prefer to visit hospitals or community clinics, which can delay necessary treatment. Some families believe that home care costs are not covered by medical insurance and are more expensive than services provided at medical institutions. They also worry that nurses providing home care may not be professional hospital nurses and that booking online may reveal personal information such as family address and medical history. These concerns restrict the growth of the “Internet Plus Nursing Services” industry ^[6].

4. The development path of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” in China in the new era

4.1. Improving the management system of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”

Governments at all levels should integrate nursing resources, establish a unified “Internet Plus Nursing Service” management platform, clarify the management authority of medical institutions, registered nurses, and patient accounts, and improve the online consultation, appointment, and management systems. Simplifying the online appointment process will facilitate easier access to appointments and consultations for patients and their families, promoting the development of on-site nursing services. The Medical Insurance Bureau should organize medical institutions at all levels to hold seminars, systematically explain the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model, introduce the basic functions of the platform, encourage hospitals and community health service centers to participate in building the on-site nursing service industry, and create a team of online nurses with high professional quality and strong service awareness, laying a solid foundation for the development of on-site nursing services ^[7]. Medical institutions should establish standards for on-site nursing services, such as daily nursing operation standards, standardized use of medical devices, and medical waste disposal standards. An evaluation module should be set up for on-site nursing services to collect feedback from patients and their families, address issues promptly, and improve satisfaction with “Internet Plus Nursing Services.” Additionally, government departments should formulate a comprehensive management system for “Internet Plus Nursing Service,” defining the operational, charging, and satisfaction evaluation standards for different nursing services. They should also safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of nurses and patients, comprehensively monitor online nursing service orders, handle complaints promptly, and build trust among patients and their families ^[8].

4.2. Standardizing the process of on-site nursing waste disposal

Medical institutions at all levels should regularly conduct training for online nurses. This training should cover nursing skills for various types of diseases to enhance the quality of on-site services and include instruction on proper medical waste disposal. Nurses should be required to handle medical waste according to hospital standards, classify medical waste, and avoid mixing it with household waste to prevent bacterial contamination ^[9]. For example, institutions should clearly define the standards for handling different types of medical waste, such as used syringes, medication bottles, gauze, urinary catheters, and disinfectants. Nurses should follow aseptic procedures during on-site nursing, use professional medical garbage bags to recycle used cotton swabs, cotton balls, alcohol, syringes, infusion sets, and urinary catheters, inform patients and their families about the proper disposal methods, remind them to place medical waste in designated garbage cans and ensure daily disinfection of patient rooms. The treatment results of medical waste should be uploaded to the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” management platform for supervision by medical institutions ^[10].

4.3. Ensuring information security for nurses and patients

Medical and health administrative departments should strengthen the management of personal information for nursing staff and patients on the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” platform, ensuring the safety of nurses during home visits, maintaining patient confidentiality, and protecting the legitimate rights and interests of both parties to ensure the smooth development of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” project. For example, the platform should remind patients and their families to purchase medications from regular hospitals or pharmacies and require patients to accurately report their medical history and medication allergies. This information helps nurses prepare for emergencies and avoid administering drugs that could cause allergic reactions ^[11]. The medical management department should also strengthen the protection of patients’ personal information on the platform, bolster the platform’s network security to resist external threats, and prevent data breaches. Patients should be reminded to safeguard their personal accounts and passwords to protect their rights ^[12]. To ensure the quality of on-site nursing services and the protection of both parties’ rights, nursing staff could activate location tracking on their mobile devices and use camera equipment to document the nursing service. This documentation would help ensure patient privacy and provide accurate data in the event of medical disputes or accidents, further promoting the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” industry ^[13].

4.4. Using the Internet to promote the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” platform

Government departments should actively promote the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” platform, changing the attitudes of patients and their families toward online appointments and on-site nursing services, and attracting more users to register on the platform. To deepen public understanding of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model, the government can use new media channels like WeChat, Weibo, and TikTok to promote the service model, encourage on-site nursing service appointments, introduce the range of services, outline medical security and rights protection, recommend qualified nursing staff, and clarify charging standards. This will help patients and their families choose appropriate nursing projects and personnel, support the industry’s development, and optimize the allocation of medical resources ^[14]. For example, nursing staff can access basic information about patients’ conditions, medical histories, and allergy records online, as well as commonly used medications. They can also register patients’ appointments for on-site nursing projects, provide a professional consultation experience, educate patients and families on health-related topics such as diet, massage, and home disinfection, and build trust in “Internet Plus Nursing Services.” This helps address healthcare access challenges ^[15]. The government should vigorously support the development of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” industry, using new media to promote the service, raising public awareness, enhancing grassroots medical services, and meeting the healthcare needs of the population.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” model helps balance medical resources by providing on-site nursing services for elderly patients, individuals with disabilities, those with major illnesses, and others in need. This model addresses medical challenges and offers rehabilitation guidance, health advice, and other essential knowledge, contributing to the construction of a Healthy China. The government should increase support for the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” industry by providing additional funding and talent development, encouraging qualified nurses to register promptly, and expanding the network of contracted nurses. Efforts should also be made to develop the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” management platform, streamline online consultations, appointment scheduling, and complaint handling processes, ensure the safety of nursing staff during on-site visits, protect patient personal information, and standardize the disposal of medical waste generated by on-site

nursing. These measures will collectively enhance the development of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service.”

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Li M, Huang S, Wu J, et al., 2022, Development Status of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *Scientific Consulting (Science and Technology–Management)*, 2022(4): 83–86.
- [2] Li X, Jin Y, 2023, Development Prospect of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” Model. *Health Vocational Education*, 41(11): 61–63.
- [3] Fang J, 2023, Problems and Development Countermeasures in the Implementation of Internet Plus Nursing and Medical Services in General Surgery. *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine Management*, 31(10): 157–159.
- [4] Song L, Chen X, Kou Y, et al., 2022, The Current Situation of Home Nursing Services Abroad and Its Enlightenment on China’s “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *Contemporary Nurses (The Second Ten-Day Issue)*, 29(12): 36–40.
- [5] Wang Y, Zhang J, Duan M, 2021, Research on the Development Path of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” in Shanghai under PPP Mode. *Reform and Opening-up*, 2021(15): 29–37.
- [6] Wang Q, Shan Q, Li Y, et al., 2021, Research on the Construction and Countermeasures of the New Development Model of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *China Digital Medicine*, 16(4): 97–100.
- [7] Yang W, Zhen T, Wu M, et al., 2021, Investigation and Analysis of Nurses’ Cognition of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *Journal of Mount Taishan Medical College*, 42(2): 85–88.
- [8] Wang Y, Li Y, Xu J, et al., 2021, Research on the Status Quo of the Service Operation of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” and the Development Countermeasures – Taking the Online Appointment Nurses in Zhengzhou as an Example. *Computer Knowledge and Technology*, 17(10): 275–277 + 280.
- [9] Zheng X, Dong L, 2023, Qualitative Study on the Participation of Specialized Nurses in Non-Pilot Areas in the Real Experience of “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *China Clinical Nursing*, 15(4): 204–208.
- [10] Du J, He Y, Zhu X, 2023, The Establishment and Practice of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” Nurse Training System Based on the Core Competence of Online Appointment Nurses. *China Rural Medicine*, 30(16): 41–43 + 58.
- [11] Zhang C, Nie M, Guo R, et al., 2023, Survey and Analysis on the Health Needs of Rural Residents in Henan Province for “Internet Plus Nursing Service”. *Chinese Medical Guide*, 21(22): 122–124.
- [12] Chen W, Qi Z, Li X, et al., 2023, Research Progress on the Application of the “Internet Plus Nursing Service” Model in the Elderly at Home. *Contemporary Nurses (Midterm Journal)*, 30(8): 9–13.
- [13] Chen C, Xie Q, Yang F, et al., 2023, “Internet Plus Nursing Service” Practice and Situation Analysis. *Guangzhou Pharmaceutical*, 54(7): 45–51.
- [14] Huang Q, Huang R, Lei C, et al., 2023, Analysis on the Current Situation and Influencing Factors of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” in China. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 9(13): 2386–2390.
- [15] Ma M, Dai Y, Jin L, 2023, SWOT Analysis on the Current Situation of “Internet Plus Nursing Service” in China. *Health Vocational Education*, 41(9): 143–147.

Publisher’s note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.