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The role of the psychiatric nurse in integrated care

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The World Health Organization estimates global rates of mental illness in a lifetime to be one in four individuals, with 42.5 million individuals currently having a mental illness. While rates of mental health disorders are high, access to specialty providers is low. The multifactorial challenges to accessing mental health services include an aging workforce, limited number of providers, increase need, lack of insurance and stigma. Opportunities exist to combat the challenges to access high quality mental health services. One proposed solution is increasing primary care knowledge to treat common and less acute mental health disorders. For example, integrated care model have been developed to provide a mental health specialist as a consultant, co-located provider or integrated member of the care team. Psychiatric mental health nurse generalists and advanced practice registered nurses are poised to fill the identified gap in care. In the United States, nurses are the most trusted member of the healthcare profession and bring a unique skillset to the care of persons at risk, with symptoms of, or a diagnosed mental health disorder. The focus of this presentation is to discuss the role of the psychiatric nurse as a member of the integrated health care team who provide mental health education, health promotion, consultation or direct patient care.

Biography

Dawn M Vanderhoef is an Assistant Professor of Nursing and Psychiatry at Vanderbilt University and is the Academic Director of the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program at the School of Nursing. She is an active Member of the academic community, providing direct patient care to patients in the psychosis clinic. Her dissertation and scholarly interests include integrated care and physical health of persons with a Severe Mental Illness (SMI). She has published and has done presentation on the topics of nursing education, PMHNP's graduate education, integrated care and care of persons with SMI. Additionally, she has developed and delivered webinars and live review courses to prepare new PMHNP graduates for board certification. She is a board certified PMHNP and a Fellow of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and one of her many awards include American Psychiatric Nurses Association's Psychiatric Nurse Educator of the year.

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