

Students' Learning from Community-based Nursing Clinical Practice in a Remote Island

Naomi Yonemasu Acdan¹⁾, Naoko Inadome¹⁾

1) Kagoshima University, Faculty of Medicine, School of Health Science,
Department of Community-based Comprehensive Nursing

Abstract

PURPOSE: This paper reports on the students' experience of community-based nursing practice in a remote island and what they learned, and discuss the meaning from community-based nursing practice and suggest more effective clinical practice for the future. **METHODS:** We described how we expanded the clinical practice and analyzed students' report to know what they learned. Extracted learning from the students' report description was classified and organized according to the contents and concept. **RESULTS:** The five contents that emerged from the analysis of the students' report were; 1) Actual states of this area, 2) Environments affect residents' consciousness, 3) People live in the "connection with people", 4) The importance of understanding the residence life in the home, and 5) Knowing community makes more understanding of a person. **DISCUSSION:** Students deepened their understanding of community. Each student's theme was different, however, by grasping the whole region from each aspect, they could extract common concepts in the community. Moreover, they learned the importance of understanding actual community state to understand people who are subjects of nursing care.

Key words: community-based nursing practice, clinical practice, remote island nursing, undergraduate student

Introduction

The mandatory course "Comprehensive Nursing Clinical Practice" is offered in the 7th semester for undergraduate students in school of health science, Kagoshima University. Based on what students have learned through nursing lectures and clinical practice so far, they think about themes that they want to deepen and select study areas and practice facilities. Because Kagoshima prefecture has many isolated islands and remote areas, to educate nurses who can contribute to promote the health of people in remote islands and remote areas is one of the educational goals of Kagoshima University. However, students have been practicing nursing mainly at the medical facilities so far, and the community based learning opportunities in rural areas are few. Therefore, as one of the clinical

practice opportunities of this course, we planned the community-based clinical practice at a municipal office in a remote island in 2018.

This paper reports on the students' experience of nursing practice in a remote island and what they learned, and discuss the meaning of community-based nursing practice and suggest a more effective clinical practice for the future.

Method

1. Overviews of the clinical practice in one of a municipal in the remote island

1) The practiced facility

The clinical practice was conducted in A-town office located in a remote island under the supervision of the municipi-

Contact: Naomi Yonemasu Acdan
8-35-1 Sakuragaoka, Kagoshima-shi, kagoshima, Japan
Tel/Fax: +81-99-275-6793
E-mail: yonemasu@health.nop.kagoshima-u.ac.jp

pal public health nurses (PHNs). The PHNs belong in the department of health and welfare in the town-office. A-town is approximately 450 kilometer away from our college, and it takes 11 hours by ferryboat. Population of A-town is about 1780 with an aging rate of 40%. The number of childbirth last year was 15.

2) Planning for the clinical practice

The five students were involved in this community-based practice. In this course, students set their own practical objectives by themselves and prepare a clinical practice plan. By taking this process, it is also intended to foster autonomous learning ability. Therefore, the students looked back on their own learning so far, studied about A-town using the Internet and existing materials, and set practical objectives. Because the practice place is located a long-distance from school, the faculty told the PHN supervisor on the practical theme of the students and discussed about a practice plan. Moreover, students considered their practice plans precisely; for example, who wanted to interview and the contents of information collection, according to their own theme.

3) Students' theme of the practice and contents of practice

As in the table 1, the themes of each student were variety. Table 2 indicates the example of practice activity plan. All students received orientation from PHNs the first day, and they visited the fire department and facilities of the disabled. At the clinic, each student practiced half a day. Home visit was conducted by individual students. According to each students' practice theme, the PHN supervisor chose and introduced the residents as a client or interviewees of home visit. The purpose of this home visit was to understand the resident's lives in the community and to consider the health care needs of them. And the interviews with stakeholders, such as a commerce commissioner and the chair of resident's association, were carried out for individuals or pairs. During the students' practice, the Specific Health Guidance, which is one health education for the people who did specific health examinations, was held and students were assigned a couple of residents and explained them the results of the data.

Students reported and discussed each lesson learned by them every day. Lastly, students presented their practice learned through the activity to the residents and stakeholders whom they interviewed or visited. Through the discussion of each students' learning, they found out the strength of this community is "connection with people". The strong connections of people are important for residents' health, therefore,

Table 1. Each Student Practice Theme

1. State of living and support of people with disabilities
2. Region corresponding to disaster occurrence and disaster cycle
3. Current status and issues of medical treatment in the Remote Area
4. How the community contribute to elderly's lives and health
5. Status and issues of maternal and child health care, child rearing support

Table 2. Example of the practice plan

Day1	AM	<i>Orientation*</i>
	PM	Planning for Home Visiting
Day2	AM	Municipal clinic
	PM	Home Visit
Day3	AM	Senior exercise group
	PM	<i>Visit Fire Department*/ Interview</i>
Day4	AM	Home Visit
	PM	<i>Specific Health Guidance*</i>
Day5	AM	<i>Prepare for the final presentation*</i>
	PM	<i>Presentation of Learning*</i>

**Worked with group*

students encouraged people to enhance their connection for healthier lives and strengthen their self-help and mutual help.

2. Analyzing method of students' learning

After the practice, students turned in the reports of the practice, and the reports were daily clinical practice records and free essay of comprehensive learning from the clinical practice. In the reports, the contents of practices, students' learning and thoughts were described. To analyze the students' reports from the practice, this study used a qualitative descriptive methodology. Extracted learning from the students' report description was classified and organized according to the contents and concept.

Result

This section describes the five contents that emerged from the analysis of the students' report: 1 Actual states of this area, 2 Environments affecting residents' consciousness, 3 People live in the "connection with people", 4 The importance of understanding the residence life in the home, and 5 Knowing community makes more understanding a person.

1 Actual states of this area

Depend on their practice themes, they tried to understand the circumstances of this area.

< Municipal Clinic >

It is the only medical institution in the area, one physician and two nurses work for the clinic. Senior residents tend

to use the municipal clinic and children go to a pediatric clinic outside of town. As the only clinic in the municipal, it is important to find abnormalities at an early stage and connect it to the general hospital outside of town. In the clinic, the physician and nurses listened to the story of the visiting person over time and understood not only the health problems of the mind and body, but also their living situations and about their family, and was in charge of consultation. In addition, it is important for nurses to comprehensively grasp the mental and physical condition of the patients and understand their living situation. To take care of the people comprehensively, a lot of knowledge is necessary, but the challenge is that training opportunities are not enough.

<Emergency system and disaster response >

Fire department provides medical emergency service and disaster response. One year ago, Dr. helicopter, which is an emergency helicopter that flies with a physician and a nurse, was introduced to the island, and the life-saving rate rose. When a disaster or medical emergency happens, due to geographical condition, it is difficult for the fire department to get to the area immediately, therefore, residents have to evacuate and provide first aid by themselves. The fire department is educating residents about emergency measures until an ambulance arrives. And in the community, volunteer fire corps are made up of men and women who volunteer to protect their community while engaging in their own jobs. They also give training to residents that function as community disaster leaders.

< Facility of intellectual disability >

It was the first time for the students visiting the facility of intellectual disability. According to an aging society, some residents in the facility need to receive physical care, however, only one nurse is working at the facility and not enough care givers. Also, the nurse wanted to get more knowledge of caring for people, but there are few opportunities of continuing study for remote area nurses.

<Circumstances of child raising>

Although there are few children in the community, grandparents live nearby, so it is easy for parents to get help from grandparents. Also, because of few children in the community, people in the area know the children well, so people watch over the children. Parents and children, and residents in the community are strongly connected.

<Independent and voluntary activity by the residents>

Students learned the independent and voluntary activity in the community; such as *elderly's exercise group* for preventive care, *Children's after school club* and *Watching Crop*.

The exercise groups are run by the elderly for the purpose of prevention of care. Students participated in four different group activities. At the start of the group, PHNs taught exercise, but now, the group activities are managed voluntarily. There are leaders in each group, acting on their own initiative. There was also a physical effect by exercising; furthermore, it gave pleasure in elderly lives.

Children's after school club is managed voluntarily as well. Because most mothers are working and it is difficult for mothers to take care of their children after school, so mothers made the club for their children. Volunteers are helping this club and older children take care and teach the younger children.

Watching Crop is the volunteer group to watch over the elderly as much as they can as opposed to supervising or taking care of them directly. Volunteers, they make new connections with the same volunteer members as a new community, and they strengthen their mutual support for the elderly.

<Informal support in the community>

The area where there are few shops, and a place for people to interact, and a restaurant helps with transportation for seniors so that they could go outside and interact each other.

2. Environments affect residents' consciousness

"Because of few hospitals and medical offices, it is important to work on improving health conscious of inhabitants and spread appropriate knowledge being done in a remote island."

Through practical training, students understood the connection between people's consciousness and environment; such as medical care facility, geography, experience of disaster, and population. For example, pregnant women are forced to give birth outside the island if there is abnormality during pregnancy, so they are highly conscious of self-management because of their strong desire to give birth within the island. Also, residents have the high awareness of disaster prevention because of a lot of experience of typhoon. Due to the geographical conditions, it takes time for public support to come from the center of town, so residents must evacuate themselves. Students learned that health consciousness and disaster prevention consciousness are influenced by living conditions. Furthermore, the traditional teaching that the environment is

important for the future of the children, leads to the consciousness that everyone in the community raises children.

3. People live in the “connection with the people”

“Due to the small population, people notice each other’s existence, and each person’s ties are very strong.”

“I felt the connection with a person as well as their mothers and children.”

“When I shared learning and unified it, various connections were connected with the community.”

Students found out that among older people and parents who are raising their children are strongly connected with each other, and the connection contributes to care prevention, child rearing support, disaster prevention, and leads to people’s health and a safe life; for example, people worry about, support and encourage each other. When a disaster happens, people help each other, and they built the system that assigns a person who to needs those help, and evacuate together.

4. The importance of understanding the residence life in the home

“I was able to catch uneasiness of the future home care that the family was not able to talk about so far by hearing a story of an individual at the client’s home ground place.”

For most students, it was a first time to interview residents at home and try to understand their health care needs. Because of residents’ home, they showed their real lives to the students, and could talk about their real feelings, students could understand residents’ real lives and health care needs of people. A student who visited a disabled man and his family listened about their worries about the future care of a disabled son, but they hadn’t gotten consultation so far. In this community, people have strong connections with each other and worry about and support each other, however, they have difficulty helping with serious problems and situations. Also, the PHN had been worried about and watching over the family but hadn’t had opportunity to step in them to grasp their real needs. For this case, the student grasped the family’s real concerns and thought about health care needs of them, and could make care plan under PHN’s supervision.

5. Knowing community makes more understanding of a person

“I could know the person who lived there by knowing the community and know the community if I knew the person who lived there.”

“For the understanding of the person whom the nursing

applied to, as a person who is living in the community, I learned that understanding of the community was important.”

Students found that they could know the actual situation of the people who lived there more deeply by knowing the actual states of the area. Also, students found that residents’ consciousness and ways of thinking are strongly affected by the community, so to know community helps the understanding of people who need nursing care. The municipal clinic nurses were providing care based on understanding patients background and lives in the community. Students learned the importance of knowing whole individuals lives, and how they could know it.

Discussion

1. The effect of activity working with 5 students in the one area of remote island

From the analysis of the students learning, they could know the actual states of the community and consider about along each theme. Each theme was different, but the target was for people living in that area, and it was possible to think of by integrating the areas where all the ages live. By grasping the whole region from each aspect, they could extract common concepts; it was people’s connection. Moreover, they could think about the meaning of “people’s connection”; such as, how it contributes to residents’ lives and health and how they are able to enhance it. Students could learn deeply by practicing in the same area as a team.

Furthermore, the learnings of the students were encouraged by the characteristics of the remote islands. The remote islands are areas where unique climate and culture have been cultivated¹⁾, and as the actual status of the area which students grasped, medical and welfare resources are not enough, but the resident’s self-help and mutual capabilities are strong. By the significant feature of remote islands, students were able to learn the importance of the connection of residents, and the fact that it affects lives and health of people.

2.Importance of understanding characteristic of community

Through the clinical practice in the community, students recognized that individuals and families interact with their social and physical environments and the systems that influence their health²⁾. It is important for nurses to understand individuals’ whole lives include family and way of thinking. The people’s way of thinking is deeply affected by characteristic of their community. Therefore, to understand people, it is necessary to understand community. Community diagnosis³⁾ or

community assessments⁴⁾ is used for understanding community, and the items for the community diagnosis are shown. Students didn't follow the community diagnosis process, and they planned what they would know depends on their own practice theme, however, the actual states in the community which students grasp during the practice were part of the community diagnosis. It is necessary to do community diagnosis for the practice in the community-based, and it is able to help deeply to understand of people as nursing clients.

3. For the future clinical practice

This is only 5 days of practice, however, students learned a lot of things in the short period. To enhance their learning, preparation and discussion after the practice are important. For example, if we try to collect data according to the items of community diagnosis or community assessment, students may deepen the understanding of community and residents. During the clinical practice, students discussed each day's learning, but they couldn't have a time to share comprehensive learning from the whole practice process or deepen the meaning community-based nursing. We need to take more time to share each other's learning and discuss about health care in the remote island and what is important in community-based nursing in the remote area.

Conclusion

This paper introduced community-based clinical practice in the remote island. Five students set their own themes and planned activities in the five days of practice. They could understand the actual state in the remote island, and learned residents' ways of thinking are affected with environments; therefore, it is important for nurses to understand communities well for comprehensive understanding of patients.

We appreciate everyone in the area who accepted and coordinated the clinical practice in accordance with the various themes of the students.

References

- 1) 宮崎美砂子, 北山三津子, 春山早苗, 他編: 最新公衆衛生看護学各論2, 第2版, 日本看護協会出版会, 東京, 2018, p164-175
- 2) Schaffer MA, Garcia CM, Schoon PM, editors. Population-Based Public Health Clinical Manual, the Henry Street Model for Nurses. Indianapolis: Sigma Theta Tau International; 2011: 4-12
- 3) Berthold T, Miller J, Avila-Esparza A, editors. Founda-

tions for community health workers, San Francisco: A Wiley Imprint; 2009, 394-422

- 4) Anderson ET, McFarlane JM. Community as partner: theory and practice in nursing. 5th edition, Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 2009, 217-263