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The Role of Nurses in the Care of Children & Adolescents with Type One Diabetes

Lauren Francis
laurfrancis3@gmail.com

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Introduction

- It is estimated that 1.25 million Americans are currently living with type one diabetes.
- The rate of type one diabetes is expected to increase 3.3 fold by 2050.
- Living with diabetes puts the patient at high risk for complications in the long term.

Research question

What is the role of the nurse in the continuum of care with children and adolescents with type one diabetes?

Theoretical Framework

The AACN Synergy Model was used to guide this literature review.

Results

- Education, coordination of care, diabetes self-management as well as psychological health are fundamental roles a nurse plays in the care of children & adolescents.
- These roles differ across the various clinical settings, as well as the level of education the nurse holds.
- Engaging the nurses in these roles, with specific objectives leads to improved patient outcomes and decreased health care costs.

Implications

- Without separating the role by level of education and clinical setting, the overlap leads to ambiguous roles, such as education and coordination of care.
- Poorly defined roles can lead to a mismatch in patient and nurse characteristics, leading to antagonistic relationship.
- Precisely defining the role allows for the patient and nurse relationship to flourish over the course of care.

Conclusion

- Patients living with a chronic condition require care in various settings.
- This creates a need for defining the role of the nurse based on clinical setting, as well as education level.
- Nurses practicing by a defining role create the opportunity to form a harmonious relationship that begins in the adolescent years.