

PDF - THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN AN HOSPITAL - researchcub.infoworker in the hospital. The main instrument that was used in this study was the questionnaire which was designed in a way that will enable the researcher to have strong evidence about the importance of social worker in the hospital, particularly in the Psychiatric Hospital, Uselu, Benin City. It was also aimed at identifying the various important roles social workers play in the rehabilitation of patient in the hospital. At the end of the work, useful recommendations were made; some of which are government should encourage all social workers by way of providing them with in-service training. Enhance remuneration and regular elevation in their places of work as they are made to face the challenges of societal problems everyday.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

2.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There are many notions of what the role of a social worker should be; we identify the more prevalent of them. They are not presented in terms of any historical or chronological continuity but – to assist this brief analysis – almost as ideal type Francozo and Cassorla (2004). They are readily identified in the literature about social work. They are also inextricably associated with the value and principle seen to underpin social work in general.

Social workers in hospital necessary work alongside other health care professionals and other relevant health care profession and the perspectives on social work held by doctors and senior nurses are relevant both to their relationship with social workers and to the smooth running of the hospital (Kearney, and Skehill, 2005).

The nurses and doctors roles rated the quality of social work practice predominantly by the extent to which the social worker was seen to identify unambiguously with the hospital and its ethos: but they also set great store by the presence and easy accessibility of a social worker, and they preferred regular contact with the same person (Popple, Philip N, 2008). They saw the social worker as a lay agent within the health care framework, and acknowledge that the social care role and the social worker's link with the community were crucial component of a good hospital practice.

Medical social work is a sub-discipline of social work, also known as hospital social work. Medical social workers typically work in a hospital, skilled nursing facility or hospice, have a graduate degree in the field, and work with patients and their families in need of psychosocial help. Medical social workers assess the psychosocial functioning of patients and families and intervene as necessary. Interventions may include connecting patients and families to necessary resources and supports in the community; providing psychotherapy, supportive counseling, or grief counseling; or helping a patient to expand and strengthen their network of social supports.

Medical social workers typically work on an interdisciplinary team with professionals of other disciplines (such as medicine, nursing, physical, occupational, speech and recreational therapy, etc.)

The medical social workers job is to perform assessment with patients to assess for any physical, mental or emotional needs they assess the family support system and link the patient with service to help with care if needed. Baresford, (2000) assistance with financial concern, such as not being able to afford medication or pay household bills. Gould (2006) some social workers provide counselling to patients who are suffering from depression or who are having difficulty coping. Ultimately, a social worker links and makes referrals to agencies to assist the patient with all of these services. Butlerlan and Giverda (2004) in most cases, social worker can provide a great deal of assistance and support to help a patient cope emotionally and financially deals with illness. In addition, healthcare staff also feel comforted when they know the social worker is going

to help the patients because it means that they have fewer problems with the patient not getting necessary treatment.

Refugee Council (2005) social workers help educate and provide support to patients and their families. Just like nurses, physicians and therapists, social workers are experts in their field. One of the main benefits of a social worker is helping to be sure the patient knows what services are available. This can help increase patient's safety and increase the possibility that the patient will not return to the hospital.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rate at which people are affected by mental illness is alarming in the world and Nigeria in particular (WHO, 2001), and at times the psychiatrist alone will not be able to manage the problems of most of the neurological patients. Hence the role of social workers in psychiatric hospital is vital, to help diagnose the social problems of patients. In recent years, evidence has shown that increase in mental disorder are attributed to social problems such as unemployment, divorce, retrenchment, addiction, religion, low standard of living, loss of parental love, lack of educational achievement etc.

Such a situation does concern all mental health and allied professionals, essentially of social worker practicing in mental health institution believes that mental health disorder are directly attributable to social problems that characterize society.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- i. To create awareness about how social workers work with patients and their families.
- ii. To enlighten the public about how medical social worker assess the psycho social functioning of patients and their families.
- iii. To create awareness on how medical social worker counsel mental patients and their families. And how social workers help to expand and strengthen the network of support to patients.
- iv. To create awareness based on how social worker's plan and conduct programmes to prevent substance abuse or improve health and counselling in community.
- v. To educate the public about how medical social worker's intervene as advocate for patients to resolve emergency problem.
- vi. To create awareness, formulate or co-ordinate programmes plan for treatment, care and rehabilitation of patients based on social worker experience and knowledge.

1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study will focus on the roles of a social worker in psychiatric hospital, Uselu, Benin City. The focus will be the patients in Psychiatric Hospital, Uselu, Benin City.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The significance of this study is to create awareness on the importance of medical social worker towards promotion of psychological well being of individual, families and community. It will also reveal how medical social workers work with other medical practitioners with the aim of finding resolution to patients' problems, with intention to ameliorate or solve their problems.

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

INDIVIDUAL AND CHILD WELFARE

This is concerned with the social worker getting to know the well being of the patients or family as a whole.

COUNSELLING

This involves social worker listening and attempting to understand the patient and provide answers or

solutions to patients' problems.

Counselling is mostly conducted in private and the discussion is confidential. Counselling is concerned with problems solving behaviour modification process.

CHILD WELFARE

This is concerned with the social worker's finding solution for the well being of the children in the hospital, various humanitarian organization and meaningful individual.

RECONSTRUCT

This is concerned with conversing a patient in ways in which is expected to change his/her behaviour.

1. To help them to have a normal life again.
2. To make sure they stop associating with their bad peer group which always lead them to drug.
3. To counsel them about the danger of taking hard drugs like Indian hemp, cocaine, heroin, etc.

HOMELESSNESS

If a patient is homeless the medical officer/social worker will liaise with the voluntary/statutory agencies that specialize in working with homeless person in the state, to provide shelter for the patients.

DISCHARGE PLANNING

This complex process which begins on a person's admission in hospital, involves assessing, counselling and planning. It may involve issues as:

1. Loss of independence and control
2. Separation from loved ones
3. Adjustment to life style changes and or possibilities of not returning home.

NETWORKING

Is the practice of liaising with statutory and voluntary services and agencies, to keep patient/families/careers informed of their right and linking them with appropriate support network and group.

ELDER ABUSE

The practice of helping the elderly people in society (Greene Roberta, 2008), if any individual has any suspicion/concern that any elderly has been abuse or may be at risk of abuse, they should contact the medical social worker immediately.

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