

Nursing Practice

COMMENT

“Be bold and take action to improve the care we provide”

Anursing and midwifery career gives us incredible experiences and privileges. We provide care, health promotion advice as well as treatment for ill health. We support the people in our care and their families when they are at their most vulnerable and when clinical expertise, care and compassion matter most. There is hardly an intervention, treatment or care programme in which we do not play a significant part.

Like many others, I started out in my career with one main aim – to help the people in my care. Back then, as now, I wanted to make a difference and to keep on improving my skills.

This commitment to improve and make a difference through the care we provide is the touchstone of our nursing midwifery and caregiving vision and strategy. At the heart are six areas that define nursing: care, compassion, courage, commitment, communications and competence. These 6 Cs are behaviours and values that encapsulate what we in the caring professions do.

Both Viv Bennett, director of nursing at the Department of Health, and I are passionate about this vision and strategy. It looks at how nurses, midwives and caregivers can be supported to provide excellent care. It examines ways to help us improve this care and take action when required. We need to make visions a reality, and we are committed to supporting staff to enable them to provide compassionate care.

An increased respect for our profession coupled with an increased pride in what we do is crucial. There have been too many stories about the lack of care, compassion and

competence in the last few years. This is why it is vital for all of us to discuss, debate and share with one another how we can put patients at the heart of what we do. We need to show the public that we are committed to delivering care with knowledge, skill and compassion. We must be bold and take action to improve the care we provide.

We all have the opportunity to make a significant difference by ensuring the 6 Cs inform and influence everything we do.

Care sits at the heart of our profession. People have a right to quality care and expect it to be consistent day in and day out.

Compassion relates to the way we provide care and how patients see us. Our relationships should demonstrate empathy, kindness, respect and dignity.

Competence is having the knowledge, skills and capability to do our job to the highest possible standards.

Communication is vital in our role as active listeners with our patients, their support networks, our teams and our leaders.

Courage means we should always do the right thing, make the right decisions and speak up when we have good ideas.

Commitment will make our vision for the person receiving care, our teams and our profession happen. We need to commit to take action to achieve this.

Every decision we take has an impact on those we look after. Collectively if we work together and use the power we have we can really make a difference. **NT**

● Find out more about our vision and tell us what you think at tinyurl.com/nursingvision

Jane Cummings is chief nursing officer, NHS Commissioning Board

HIGHLIGHTS

Pain management at the end of life *p16*

The role of cognitive stimulation in dementia care *p23*

How to manage soft tissue injuries *p12*



SPOTLIGHT

Skills in taking temperature need refreshing

Taking and recording a patient's temperature is a task that every nurse will carry out thousands and thousands of times.

Familiarity can sometimes lead to lack of attention – but this common procedure is important. Temperature is one of the four vital signs taken to monitor and assess a patient's condition. It needs to be accurately measured to make sure that any deterioration is identified and acted on quickly.

On page 20, our expert authors describe how the body maintains a healthy temperature, and looks at the

sites where temperature can be measured and the issues affecting their accuracy.

Refreshing knowledge and keeping up with developments and research is essential to practice – even for something as straightforward as taking a temperature.



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