



Crisis Communication: The Transformative Role of Nurses in COVID-19 Response

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Introduction and Background: The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the indispensable role of nurses in fostering community resilience and effective health communication during crises. As frontline responders, nurses utilized consultative hotlines to address public concerns, dispel misinformation, and provide essential health guidance. This study investigates the experiences of nurses in consultation roles during the pandemic, emphasizing their contributions to community-oriented nursing practices.

Aim of Study: The objective of this research is to explore the lived experiences of nurses involved in COVID-19 hotline consultations, focusing on how these experiences shaped their professional roles and enhanced community resilience.

Methods: Employing a descriptive phenomenological approach, this qualitative study conducted semi-structured interviews with 50 nurses from various backgrounds, including faculty members, practical nurses, and nursing managers. Participants were purposefully selected based on their involvement in hotline consultations at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. Data collection occurred over five months until thematic saturation was achieved.

Findings: The analysis identified five core themes including 1. Nurse Consultation as a Vital Link in Community Health, 2. Leveraging COVID-19 as an Opportunity to Showcase Nursing Roles, 3. Development of a Consultative Identity Among Nurses, 4. Demonstrated Competency in Consultation Practices, 5. Providing Reassurance and Calm to the Public. These themes illuminate how nurses effectively navigated their consultative roles, significantly enhancing community coping strategies during the pandemic.

Discussion: The findings underscored the critical importance of nursing consultations in public health emergencies. Nurses not only served as information providers but also built trust within communities, adapting their communication strategies to meet diverse needs. Their efforts were instrumental in alleviating anxiety and countering misinformation.

Conclusion: This study concludes that robust nursing consultation is essential for fostering community resilience in the face of health crises. By leveraging their expertise, nurses can enhance public understanding and preparedness, ultimately alleviating pressure on healthcare systems during emergencies. The insights gained from this research advocate for the integration of nursing consultation roles into future public health frameworks to ensure sustained community support during crises.

Keywords: COVID-19, Nursing Consultation, Health Communication, Hotline Services, Crisis Management