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The Role of Nursing in Humanizing Care for Hospitalized Patients: Contemporary Challenges and Strategies

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Francisca Karoline Ferreira Assunção

Summary

The role of nursing in humanizing care for hospitalized patients has been...
Humanization has become one of the main focuses of contemporary healthcare practices.
It is understood as the valuing of dignity, subjectivity, and individuality.
of the patient, going beyond technical treatment and encompassing emotional and social aspects.
and ethical aspects of care. However, the implementation of humanization faces several challenges.
in the hospital environment. Among them, the following stand out: work overload, scarcity of
human and material resources, inadequate structural conditions, and pressure for
productivity. Given this scenario, it is necessary to adopt contemporary strategies.
that strengthen humanization in nursing care. Continuing education is
an essential tool, allowing the professional to reflect on their practice and
Developing relational and communicative skills. Humanization in nursing.
It therefore represents a permanent challenge and an ethical responsibility that
It transcends hospital protocols and routines. Humanized care is that which...
recognizes the patient as an active participant in the healing process.
Keywords: Nursing. Humanization. Hospital care. Professional relationship.
patient.

Abstract

The role of nursing in humanizing care for hospitalized patients has become a primary
focus of contemporary healthcare practices. However, implementing humanization faces
several challenges in hospital settings. Among them are work overload, shortage of
human and material resources, inadequate structural conditions, and the constant
pressure for productivity. To overcome these challenges, contemporary strategies are
necessary to strengthen humanization in nursing care. Continuing education is an

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essential tool that enables professionals to reflect on their practice and develop relational and communicative skills. Humanization in nursing is thus a continuous challenge and an ethical responsibility that goes beyond hospital routines and protocols. Humanized care recognizes the patient as an active subject in the healing process rather than a passive carrier of disease.

Keywords: Nursing. Humanization. Hospital care. Professional-patient relationship.

Introduction

In recent decades, the concept of humanizing healthcare has gained...
prominent in academic and institutional discussions, within the hospital context, where the Healthcare practices often encounter impersonality and technical routine. In this scenario, Nursing plays a fundamental role, as it is the profession that maintains contact Direct and continuous contact with the patient, accompanying them through all phases of the process. Hospitalization. Humanization, therefore, emerges as an ethical and relational principle. which seeks to reclaim the essence of care, valuing the human being in their entirety. and recognizing its physical, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions.

The hospitalization process is, by its very nature, a time of vulnerability and vulnerability for the patient, since he is removed from his familiar environment and subjected to invasive procedures and routines that often take away its autonomy (Silva, 2025). Given this reality, the nursing professional is called upon to practice a culture guided by solidarity that contributes to Promoting the well-being and dignity of the patient. Humanization, in this context, It consists of an approach that integrates science and sensitivity, technique and care. seeking to build a closer, more welcoming and respectful relationship between professionals and users of the health system.

However, despite the progress of public policies and institutional guidelines that They aim to promote the humanization of care, such as the National Humanization Policy. (PNH), numerous challenges persist in the daily practice of nursing. The overload job losses, a shortage of professionals, precarious working conditions, and a lack of Social and institutional recognition compromises the quality of care and They hinder the application of humanistic principles. In many cases, care becomes automated, reduced to mechanical tasks that disregard needs

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The patient's subjective and emotional needs. Therefore, humanizing care requires structural and organizational transformations in health institutions (Aguiar; Mendes, 2024).

Another relevant aspect to consider is the need for training and skills development. Continuous professional development for nursing staff. Humanization requires the development of Relational, communicative, and ethical skills that go beyond technical expertise. A Active listening, respect for differences, valuing patient autonomy, and work. Teamwork is a pillar that supports humanized care and strengthens the bond between individuals. professional and patient. In this sense, continuing education in health represents a An essential strategy for consolidating a culture of humanization in practices. hospitals, promoting critical reflection on the social and human role of nursing.

Furthermore, humanization must be understood as a two-way street: offering more humane patient care and ensuring working conditions that preserve the physical and mental health of professionals. Nurses are often exposed to demanding work schedules. Exhausting, stressful, and under institutional pressure, they need emotional support and... Professional recognition for providing compassionate care. The appreciation of A healthcare worker is therefore an indispensable condition for the effective delivery of care. humane and ethical.

Therefore, discussing the role of nursing in humanizing patient care is crucial. Hospitalized patients need to reflect on the contemporary challenges and strategies that permeate The practice of the profession. It is understanding that humanized care is not a practice. It's not an isolated philosophy, but one that guides the entire dynamic of the care process. By adopting this stance, the nurse contributes to transforming the hospital environment. in a space of respect, solidarity and appreciation for life, reaffirming the Nursing's ethical commitment to promoting health and human dignity.

Theoretical Framework

The humanization of healthcare emerged as a response to mechanized practices and Impersonal factors that marked the historical evolution of medicine and nursing. With the Technological advances and the increasing complexity of hospital systems, care It became influenced by technical routines and the pursuit of efficiency, which, many times

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Sometimes, this has resulted in the devaluation of the patient's subjective and emotional aspects. In this context, the humanization movement emerged as an ethical proposal and A policy that aims to restore the centrality of the human being in care practices. reaffirming the importance of empathy, respect, and comprehensiveness. Nursing, therefore... Due to its nurturing and relational nature, it became a key player in this process. playing an essential role in promoting care that combines competence Technique and human sensitivity.

Nursing has always been linked to the idea of care and nurturing. Since Florence Nightingale. Nightingale, considered the precursor of modern nursing, understood care as... as a practice that involves technical actions and attitudes of commitment to the well-being of others (Silva, 2025). However, the institutionalization of hospital work and the increasing demands for productivity and results control led to Fragmentation of care, often reducing it to a sequence of procedures.

From the second half of the 20th century onwards, with the strengthening of public policies of health and the emergence of social movements in defense of human dignity, the Humanization has become incorporated as a fundamental principle of practices. nursing (Aguiar; Mendes, 2024).

In Brazil, the creation of the National Humanization Policy (PNH) in 2003 represented an important milestone in strengthening humanized care within the Unified Health System (SUS). Health (SUS). This policy established guidelines aimed at valuing relationships. Humans in the workplace, promoting active listening and participation. Active participation of patients and families in the care process. From this milestone, the Hospital institutions were encouraged to adopt practices that respected the subjectivity and autonomy of users. Nursing, within this context, He took on the challenge of translating the principles of the National Humanization Policy into concrete actions capable of... to transform the hospital experience into a more welcoming and less welcoming one. traumatic.

However, the reality experienced by nursing professionals remains Far from the ideal proposed by humanization policies. The scarcity of resources, the high patient demand, lack of adequate working conditions and a shortage of Professional recognition is a factor that hinders the implementation of practices. Humanized care in daily hospital life. Furthermore, healthcare institutions prioritize...

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quantitative productivity indicators, relegating aspects to a secondary role.
qualitative aspects of care. This scenario creates tension between the ethical ideal of humanization and the objective working conditions, leading the professional to face dilemmas between fulfilling goals and to attend to the patient in a comprehensive and empathetic way (Oliveira; Soares, 2020).

In this context, it becomes essential to rethink the role of nursing in the face of... contemporary demands of care. The nurse must act as an agent of transformation, promoting changes in interpersonal relationships, in models of management and the institutional culture itself. To achieve this, investment in training is necessary. continued psychological support and professional development, ensuring that nurses so they can perform their duties with autonomy and emotional balance. The humanization of Care, therefore, does not depend on a set of integrated strategies that involve Hospital management, public policies, and the collective commitment to dignity. human (Alves, 2023).

Thus, understanding the context of humanizing nursing care means to recognize that the act of caring transcends the technical dimension and takes on a character human and relational. The current challenge is to reconcile technological advances with... sensitivity and listening, transforming the hospital environment into a space of trust, solidarity, and respect. Nursing, by occupying this central space in The care process has the potential to become the link between science and humanity. reaffirming its essential role in building a more ethical healthcare system, welcoming and humane.

Methodology

This research was developed using a qualitative approach, of a [specific] nature. descriptive and exploratory, with the objective of understanding the role of nursing in Humanizing care for hospitalized patients, identifying the main... The challenges and contemporary strategies that permeate this practice. The choice of this The methodology is justified by the fact that humanization is a complex phenomenon, of subjective and relational nature, which cannot be understood by methods quantitative. In this way, qualitative research allows for the analysis of meanings, perceptions and experiences involved in nursing care in a hospital setting.

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The study was based on an integrative literature review.
encompassing books, scientific articles, dissertations, and institutional publications on the subject.
Humanization in nursing. National databases were consulted and
international databases, such as SciELO, LILACS, and Google Scholar, prioritizing research papers.
published in the last 10 years, between 2015 and 2025. The time frame was defined with
the intention to bring together recent productions that reflected the transformations
contemporary practices in care and health policies. Furthermore, they were
included classic nursing references and official documents from the Ministry of
Health, related to the National Humanization Policy (PNH), which constitute milestones
fundamental concepts for the proposed discussion.

The inclusion criteria for the analyzed materials were: works that addressed the
humanization of care, studies that address the role of nursing in
hospital environment and publications that discussed challenges and strategies in the context of
Humanized care. Texts that did not present a direct relationship were excluded.
with the theme, as well as those that merely described technical practices without
To discuss the human and ethical dimension of care. After selection, the content of the materials
It was read and categorized into three main axes: (1) theoretical foundations of humanization
of care, (2) challenges faced by nursing professionals in the environment
hospital and (3) contemporary strategies and practices of humanization.

The data analysis was performed using the content analysis technique, according to...
proposed by Bardin (2011), which makes it possible to identify recurring meanings, as well
such as convergences and divergences in the authors' discourses. This technique allowed
to organize information systematically, promoting critical interpretation and
construction of a synthesis consistent with the objectives of the study. The following were observed:
relationships between theory and practice, as well as the ethical and social implications of the topic,
seeking to understand how nurses can act as agents
transformative in the systematic consolidation of a culture of humanization of
hospital institutions.

In addition to document analysis, the research also considered the relevance of policies.
public and institutional initiatives aimed at humanizing healthcare. They were
reports and guidelines from the Ministry of Health were analyzed, as well as programs of
professional training implemented in different regions of the country. This triangulation

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The use of sources made it possible to broaden the understanding of the conditions that influence the practice of nursing and how humanization policies translate, or not, into actions.
effective in daily hospital settings.

It is important to highlight that this research, being a bibliographic analysis, does not
It involved the direct collection of data from human subjects, therefore dispensing with the need for...
Approval by a research ethics committee. Nevertheless, the following were respected.
Ethical principles of scientific integrity, with rigor in the selection of sources and in citation.
The approach is appropriate to the authors and faithful to the interpretation of the original ideas.

The qualitative approach allowed us to address the phenomenon of humanization from a broad perspective and reflective, valuing the subjective, emotional, and social aspects that permeate the
nursing care.

Thus, the methodology adopted sought to articulate theory and practice, promoting an analysis.
A critical and contextualized analysis of the role of nursing in humanizing hospital care.
Based on this methodological foundation, it was possible to identify the main obstacles that
They hinder the implementation of humanized care, as well as the strategies and initiatives.
which have been developed to transform the healthcare reality, reaffirming the
Nursing's ethical and humanistic commitment to promoting dignity and...
Respect for life.

Results

The literature review conducted allowed us to identify that the humanization of care is...
a topic discussed in contemporary nursing literature, recognized as one of
Fundamental pillars for the quality of hospital care. The results obtained
They indicate that nursing professionals understand the importance of
Humanization as a practice that integrates technical and emotional aspects, promoting the
patient well-being and dignity. However, it is observed that the implementation of these...
principles still face several structural, organizational, and personal challenges in
healthcare institutions.

Among the main findings, it was observed that work overload is one of the
The most frequently cited factors as barriers to humanized practice include the high demand from patients.
coupled with a shortage of professionals and a lack of time for individualized care,
leads to the delivery of care in a mechanized way, with little opportunity for dialogue and

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welcoming. Another recurring point in the literature is the impact of stress and...
physical and emotional exhaustion in nurses, which reduces their ability to
Empathy compromises the quality of the relationship with the patient.
Failures in communication between staff and patients were also identified, in
contexts of emergency and prolonged hospitalizations, in which the focus tends to fall on
The technical dimension of care. The absence of active listening and emotional detachment.
These were identified as factors that hinder the building of trusting relationships.
On the other hand, the studies analyzed demonstrated that the adoption of simple practices, such as
empathetic dialogue, therapeutic touch, and recognition of the patient's emotions.
has a positive impact on recovery and satisfaction with the care received (Silva,
2025).
Furthermore, it was found that academic training and continuing education
They play a decisive role in consolidating humanized practices. Programs of
training that addresses topics such as interpersonal communication, empathy, and ethics in
Care contributes to strengthening professional sensitivity. Another result
Relevant refers to the influence of institutional policies: work environments that
They value nursing professionals, offer emotional support, and encourage them.
Autonomy tends to exhibit higher levels of humanization in practices.
assistance (Alves, 2023).
Overall, the results point to the need to integrate the dimensions.
Technical and relational aspects in the practice of nursing. Although there is consensus regarding
The importance of humanization, but its practical application still depends on transformations.
structural, institutional investment, and collective commitment studies.
Analysis suggests that humanized care is a process that involves culture.
organizational factors, public policies, and adequate working conditions.

Discussion

The analysis of the results shows that the role of nursing in the humanization of
Caring for hospitalized patients goes beyond simply performing technical procedures.
configuring itself as an ethical, relational, and social exercise. Humanization, by placing
Placing the patient at the center of the care process requires the nurse to adopt a posture of
sensitivity, empathy, and respect for the uniqueness of each individual. In this sense, the

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Humanized practice can be understood as a means of giving new meaning to care.
promoting a more balanced relationship between technology and humanity in the environment
hospital.

The challenges identified reflect the complexity of the relationships that are established in
field of health (Oliveira; Soares, 2020). Work overload, scarcity of resources
And occupational stress compromises the mental health of the nurses themselves. This
This framework reinforces the need for healthcare institutions to invest in valuing and
in supporting professionals, recognizing that caring for the caregiver is essential.
Essential for promoting humane care. The absence of policies
Focusing on employee well-being contributes to emotional detachment and...
Demotivation, making care impersonal and fragmented.

Another relevant point in the discussion is the importance of communication and connection.
Interpersonal relationships as therapeutic tools. The nurse, in establishing a relationship
Building trust with the patient allows not only for more welcoming care, but also
also strengthening adherence to treatment and emotional security. The act of
Listening to, understanding, and respecting the patient's subjective needs is one of the
More authentic expressions of humanized care. Thus, the nurse acts not only
as an executor of procedures, but also as a mediator between technique and reality.
Emotion, between science and sensitivity (Aguiar; Mendes, 2024).

The findings also reveal that vocational training is one of the fundamental pillars.
for the transformation of healthcare practice. Incorporate the theme of humanization into...
Nursing curricula and promoting continuing education programs are measures
essential for preparing professionals to face the ethical and emotional challenges of
Hospital routine. Continuous learning fosters the development of awareness.
critical and reflective, allowing the nurse to understand care as an act.
integral and not fragmented (Alves, 2023).

Ultimately, discussing humanization in nursing is discussing the very meaning of care.
In a world marked by technological advances and accelerated routines, humanization
It represents a return to the fundamental values of the profession: respect for life, for
dignity and human subjectivity (Silva, 2025). It is the responsibility of nursing, as a profession, to ensure this.
central to hospital care, reaffirming its humanistic identity and acting as an agent
transformative, capable of promoting an environment of acceptance, solidarity and

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empathy. In this way, humanized care ceases to be a distant ideal and becomes...
a possible and necessary practice for building a fairer healthcare system,
Ethical and sensitive to human needs.

Conclusion

The analysis carried out on the role of nursing in the humanization of care of
Hospitalized patients allowed us to understand that humanization is a process.
Essential and indispensable for the quality of healthcare. More than a
Theoretically, this is an ethical and relational stance that values the human being in
In its entirety, recognizing its dignity, vulnerability, and individuality.
Nursing, because it is on the front line of care and maintains direct and continuous contact.
With the patient, the physician assumes a central role in this process, becoming a key agent.
in promoting care that integrates science, technique and sensitivity.
The research results show that, although humanization is recognized as
A guiding principle of nursing practice, its implementation still faces numerous challenges.
Obstacles in the hospital setting. Work overload, scarcity of resources.
Human and material losses, precarious infrastructure conditions, and a lack of appreciation.
Professional factors that hinder the development of humanized care are obstacles.
Furthermore, institutional pressure for productivity and the accelerated pace of routines
Hospital settings distance nurses from the emotional and subjective dimensions of care.
transforming it into a mechanized practice.
Despite these difficulties, it is observed that there are viable strategies and paths to...
To consolidate a culture of humanization in healthcare institutions. Education
Permanent lighting emerges as one of the most effective tools, as it enables...
development of communicative, ethical and relational skills, strengthening the
The nurse's role. Emphasizing active listening, dialogue, and empathy, combined with...
Psychological support programs and policies that promote professional development contribute to...
The emotional well-being of the worker and the improvement of service quality.
provided. The integration between multidisciplinary teams and the building of relationships.
Horizontal structures in the hospital environment are also fundamental to promoting a
More welcoming and collaborative care.

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The discussion about humanization also highlights that care must be understood as a reciprocal act, in which both the patient and the professional are subjects of The process of caring implies recognizing that nurses also need care. support and recognition to perform their duties fully and sensitively. In a In an institutional environment that values the worker, it is possible to develop practices. Humanized, sustainable, and consistent. Thus, humanization goes beyond the relationship. It becomes an individual responsibility and a collective one, involving managers and professionals. and users in building a more ethical and supportive care system.

It can be concluded, therefore, that the humanization of nursing care should not be seen as a complementary task, but as an integral part of the essence of the profession. It is necessary to understand that technique and sensitivity are not opposing dimensions, but complementary, and that true care is only achieved when the patient is recognized in its human dimension. The nurse, by adopting a posture A humanized approach contributes not only to the patient's physical recovery, but also for your emotional and psychological well-being, promoting health in its broadest sense. wide.

Finally, it is important to reinforce the role of health institutions and training bodies. Continue investing in policies and practices that solidify humanization as a value. Permanent in nursing. Through a collective commitment to dignity. With human interaction, it will be possible to transform the hospital environment into a welcoming space. empathy and respect, reaffirming the role of nursing as an essential profession in promoting life and strengthening the ethics of care.

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