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Care differences as provided by physicians versus nurses

Toshinari MIZUNO

The present study aimed to clarify differences in care as provided by physicians versus nurses. We refer specifically to Peabody's paper, "Care of patients," an important article on care by physicians, and to Benner's "From novice to experts," an important book on care by nurses.

Physician care comprises the practice of medicine, otherwise described as diagnosis and treatment. A variety of care (including physical, mental, social, and spiritual) is provided for the purpose of diagnosis and treatment. While nursing care also provides physical, mental, social, and spiritual care, these are offered independently of diagnosis and treatment.

Underlying this difference is the varying perspective of the two professional practices. Physicians identify any factors which prevent patients from healing naturally and spontaneously, target these carefully, and remove them from the patients. Nurses, on the other hand, diffuse and sustain the entire range of patient well-being, to enable the patient to heal fully in a natural and spontaneous manner.