BRIEF COMMUNICATION

What is Person-Centered Care?

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This question has been asked, and answered by multiple experts, in multiple ways[1-3]. It may be safe to say, in fact, that just as there are 8 billion inhabitants on earth, there may be 8 billion answers to this question. A standard definition of person-centered care, however, continues to be quoted in literature. The Institute of Medicine (IOM), Washington DC, USA defines person-centered care as care that is respectful of, and responsive to, the preferences, needs and values of the individual, and is guided by his or her values[4].

The word 'care' itself, can be used as a noun, or as a verb. 'Careful' is an adjective, which can be used to describe the quality of caring, or of care. The word 'person' refers to the individual who interacts with the health care system, in an effort to promote health, prevent disease, or placate illness.

In this perspective piece, we utilize the preceptive platform of our journal to decipher and describe the peculiar, poly-faceted properties of person-centered care.

Person-centered care, we feel, is much more than a mere provision of care, or even a process of health management. Person-centered care is a philosophy, which must be incorporated and internalized; a pedagogy, which must be taught and shared, and a partnership, which must be established and nurtured. It is a practical and prudent praxis, which ensures optimal prevention of disease at all levels, and allows positive payback or pay off in the form of health.

Person-centered care is a perception as well, for all stakeholders involved in health care, including the person, their peers and caregivers, the public at large, physicians and other health care providers.

Not only this, person-centered care contributes to the personal evolution and growth of the health care professional. It professes patience, persistence, and perseverance, while promoting passion and prurience for our profession. It acts as a protective shield, not only against potential professional mishaps such as litigation, but also against possible psychosocial burnout. In a nutshell, person-centered care is a proactive method of preserving and promoting one's own personal as well as professional health.

Person-centered care is a proceeding in perpetuity, which works as a virtuous chain or cycle of excellence. Enhanced experience and expertise contribute to personality development of engaged personnel. Provision of person-centered care, therefore, should be part and parcel of all health care policy making, planning, and preparation. Table 1 proposes a panorama of person-centered care, which puts all our discussion as a precis.

We understand that every publication is viewed in a person-centered manner by those who read it. Some may consider this poetry; others may label it as prosaic. Our purpose, however, is to stimulate our readers to explore the wide universe of person-centered care, and widen their horizons. This will ensure meaningful growth, not only for the persons and public we care for, but also for us, and for the profession we love so much.

Table 1. The Person-Centered Care Panorama

Person-centered care is a

- Philosophy and part of pedagogy
- Partnership between people and professionals
- Prudent and proactive practice
- Pragmatic and practical prescription
- Preventive and promotive process for health
- Positive payback or pay off
- Psychosocial protective shield
- Personality developer, promoting passion, and prurience
- Platform for patience and perseverance
- Perception of people and professionals
- Part & parcel of policy making and planning
- Proceeding in perpetuity

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