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Cultivating "Warm" Medical Practitioners: Standardized Improvement of Medical Students' Service Literacy Through Elderly-Oriented Volunteer Services

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Abstract: ***Medical students are the talent pool for the future healthcare workforce, and their development therefore requires not only professional knowledge and clinical skills but also a strong foundation in professional ethics. Professional ethics directly shape the quality and effectiveness of the clinical services these students will later provide, and physicians with sound medical ethics are more readily trusted and recognized by patients. This paper examines how volunteer services targeting older adults can be used to systematically and—standardized—improve medical students' service literacy. By participating in such services, medical students can more deeply perceive and understand the meaning of humanistic literacy and internalize it, thereby opening new pathways for cultivating "warm," compassionate medical practitioners in the future. The paper analyzes the design and implementation of elderly-oriented volunteer services as a structured educational mechanism, considers how such experiences can be integrated into ethics education for medical students, and discusses the practical implications for nurturing humanistic values alongside professional competence.***

Keywords: Medical students, Professional ethics, Service literacy, Elderly volunteer services.

1. INTRODUCTION

Voluntary service refers to the act of individuals voluntarily participating in various social service activities and promoting social development without requiring compensation, while also being willing to spend their own time and energy. Medical students participating in volunteer service not only provides social services, but also provides a good platform for them to improve their interpersonal communication skills, enhance their understanding of the society, recognize the responsibilities of medicine and the professional qualities required for this job, and accumulate more experience for future work. Elderly people in nursing homes have feelings of loneliness and isolation, and their physical fitness is relatively poor. They need more medical student volunteers to care for and pay attention to them. In the face of the continuous development of biomedical science and the new social context, it is crucial to strengthen the humanistic literacy of medical personnel.

2. CURRENT SITUATION OF HUMANISTIC LITERACY AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

Humanistic literacy comprehensively reflects various aspects of an individual's beliefs, knowledge, interpersonal communication skills, etc. It is a noble personality trait that reflects the attitude towards life in dealing with people, and is a direct manifestation of a person's moral qualities and values. It is specifically divided into two aspects: humanistic knowledge and spirit. At present, the humanistic literacy of medical students in China is not satisfactory. According to research [4], it has been found through surveys that many medical students do not truly understand the meaning of humanistic literacy. This lack of understanding will lead to a lack of sense of responsibility, low service levels, and violations of legal and ethical norms in their medical service work.

According to the 2019 survey on the service situation of nursing homes for medical students in vocational colleges in Sichuan Province, the humanistic care ability score of medical students in the province is relatively low, which is also in line with the research conclusions of other scholars in China. The reason for this problem lies in the fact that universities themselves place more emphasis on professional education, focusing on improving students' mastery of professional knowledge and skills, while neglecting students' quality education, resulting in insufficient awareness of humanistic care among students. The humanistic care in medical services requires not only possessing professional skills but also paying attention to the needs and personality of patients, respecting their basic rights, providing service care for patients from various levels such as physiology and psychology, and

helping patients recover quickly. This is the essence of the medical professional spirit. However, the ability of humanistic care is not innate and requires continuous learning and practice to achieve internalization.

3. THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN NURSING HOMES ON THE HUMANISTIC LITERACY OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

Carrying out volunteer services is also a medical humanities education model, and participating in volunteer practice activities can enhance students' humanistic literacy. There is research confirming [7] that volunteer service can effectively improve students' humanistic literacy. Lin Jinxiu and others found that through more systematic and professional volunteer services, students can better cultivate and enhance their humanistic literacy, and strengthen the professional competence of medical students [8]. Volunteer service can comprehensively enhance students' medical literacy, humanistic literacy, and vocational skills, and is an important practical teaching model.

4. CURRENT SITUATION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES IN MEDICAL STUDENT NURSING HOMES

4.1 Most vocational schools offer volunteer service opportunities, but the student participation rate is not high

According to the survey, most vocational colleges provide opportunities to volunteer in elderly care institutions, and most students who have participated in elderly care volunteer services are willing to work in such institutions. This indicates that volunteer service has a positive impact on students' future employment intentions. Although the school provides opportunities for volunteer service and related training, the proportion of students participating in volunteer service is not high. Among all the reasons for not being able to participate, students expressed a lack of channels and opportunities to go to nursing homes and a lack of time, which is similar to the conclusions of other researchers in China. This is mainly due to the heavy academic burden of medical students and their tight spare time.

4.2 Medical student volunteers have insufficient awareness of volunteer service

According to the survey results, many college students do not truly understand the connotation of volunteer service and blindly follow all volunteer service activities on campus. They ignore the volunteer spirit advocated by society and do not fully exert their professionalism during volunteer activities. When participating in medical related volunteer services, they mostly limit themselves to simple medical activities such as blood pressure measurement and distribution of health information. The reason may be that school organizers often prioritize the content and implementation of volunteer activities, without recognizing the importance of volunteer service for students' self-development. This has led to many college students having an inaccurate understanding of volunteer activities. When participating in volunteer activities, they often only consider their own needs and ignore their responsibility as medical students to society.

4.3 Single service content and uneven service quality

The services provided by medical students mainly include cleaning, chatting, health checkups, and health care. Students can demonstrate certain professional strengths in providing services, but the proportion of cultural and entertainment services is relatively limited. This indicates that the basic qualities and service art required for training services for the elderly still lack systematic guidance, resulting in uneven service quality [11]. The research by Yang Min et al. also shows that the content and needs of college students' volunteer services are seriously inconsistent, and the service efficiency of students is low, which cannot provide good service assistance for the elderly [12].

4.4 Insufficient financial support provided by schools for volunteer services

Most students go to elderly care institutions at their own expense. Research by Yang Shujun et al. shows that the lack of necessary funding limits the development of organizations participating in elderly volunteer services, resulting in some volunteers' enthusiasm and sense of responsibility not being sustained [11].

4.5 Most schools lack effective organization of volunteer services for nursing homes

Medical colleges lack a comprehensive volunteer service organization system. According to the investigation, it was found that there are many problems in volunteer organizations:

Firstly, the school volunteer organization structure is not sound, and the management rules and regulations are not perfect. This is mainly due to the lack of time for medical colleges to plan and train volunteer service teams, and the absence of scientific training programs and systematic management methods.

The second reason is that the activities are too simple, and the self-worth of the activity theme has not been fully reflected. This can be attributed to two aspects: on the one hand, the school does not provide sufficient funding for volunteer activities, which makes it difficult for various departments to carry out large-scale and content rich volunteer activities. On the other hand, the current volunteer activities in medical colleges mainly rely on the administrative management of the school, and due to the insufficient training provided by the school for volunteers, students are unable to combine their medical expertise to serve the elderly.

Thirdly, the incentive mechanism is not perfect: schools often provide spiritual support for volunteer activities, lacking corresponding material support, which can easily lead to high turnover of volunteer members and insufficient personnel.

The fourth issue is the lack of a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of volunteer services, which can easily lead to loose, inefficient, and formalistic volunteer organizations.

5. EXPLORATION OF METHODS FOR CULTIVATING MEDICAL STUDENTS' HUMANISTIC LITERACY IN ELDERLY CARE BASED ON VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN NURSING HOMES

5.1 Clarify the objectives of cultivating humanistic literacy among medical students

The humanistic literacy of medical students is a fundamental quality that a qualified medical student must possess, which is a prerequisite for improving medical education in the new era and runs through medical education. The goal of cultivating the humanistic literacy of medical students is to improve their overall quality within the framework of the knowledge structure system of medical humanities and social sciences, and to enable them to better understand themselves and pay attention to the healthy development of humanity. The ultimate goal of cultivating the humanistic literacy of medical students is to enable them to recognize themselves and pay attention to the development of social civilization, while further strengthening their own cultural literacy and promoting their comprehensive development.

5.2 Clarify Misunderstandings of "Volunteer Spirit" by Students and Nursing Homes

Neither medical students nor service recipients have a correct understanding of the meaning of volunteer service. Volunteer service is more like a kind of care between people. Medicine is a people-oriented life science, and the volunteer service of medical students is to provide humanistic care on the basis of medicine. Medical students need to have a correct understanding of the relationship between medicine and patients. The most important aspect of humanistic literacy is the care and love for human life. At present, medical volunteer service is just a simple social practice activity, where students provide basic guidance to patients and promote medical knowledge, with the ultimate goal of earning credits or achieving excellent assessment results, leading to a lack of recognition. On the other hand, for many nursing homes, medical student volunteer service is simply providing free labor, without recognizing the value of medical students in service, thus completely distorting the original intention of this medical volunteer service. Due to this misunderstanding between both parties, the final volunteer service did not reflect humanistic care.

5.3 Develop management methods for the system

In response to the current loose management of volunteer services in medical student nursing homes, a systematic management model is imperative. It is recommended that medical colleges adopt the following measures to systematize the management of volunteer services in medical student nursing homes.

Firstly, the professionalization of the volunteer service management team in nursing homes can only be achieved through specialized management in order to steer volunteer services towards the right track and routine.

Secondly, standardize the recruitment of members. Each time a volunteer is recruited, a survey questionnaire can be used to investigate the volunteer's strengths, service time, service duration, service content, and service targets (such as disease types), classify and record the above information, and establish an information database. This way, volunteer services can be arranged reasonably based on the specific situation of the volunteer members themselves.

Thirdly, strengthen the training system for college student volunteer services. To avoid the blindness of volunteer services and the occurrence of unreasonable and illegal behaviors, regular training should be carried out for college students, namely cultivating their awareness of volunteer services, norms of volunteer service behavior, and awareness of volunteer service safety; Carry out professional precise knowledge training, especially nursing knowledge and skills training related to common diseases among the elderly.

Fourthly, improve the incentive mechanism. The 2019 survey on volunteer service in the nursing home for medical students in Sichuan Vocational College showed that the incentive mechanism and evaluation system are protective factors that can affect students' humanistic care ability. Therefore, schools and society should improve incentive mechanisms for volunteer services in medical student nursing homes. Students can be encouraged to actively participate in nursing home service activities through assessment of service quality and duration, credit scoring, and issuance of honor certificates. In addition, providing financial support to students to address their heavy financial burden is also a good form of motivation. At the same time, in order to ensure the safety of students, purchasing accident insurance for students who participate in volunteer services at nursing homes is also a good form of encouraging students to participate in services.

5.4 Promote the organic integration of humanities education courses and volunteer services

In terms of cultivating humanistic literacy, schools themselves should adjust course content based on the knowledge learned in their respective majors, and combine humanistic education with professional education. At the same time, further enriching the assessment forms, medical students can be assessed through various methods such as paper writing, survey practice, etc. Through learning and participating in various practical activities, students will gradually realize the humanistic qualities of medical students, recognize the sacred discipline of medicine, and always abide by professional ethics after entering the profession, providing better treatment services and humanistic care for patients.

6. CONCLUSION

The cultivation of medical students' humanistic literacy based on volunteer services in nursing homes is currently the easiest practical platform for humanistic literacy. Universities should seize the opportunity to continuously expand the fields and perspectives of medical students' humanistic literacy cultivation, and cultivate more medical students with humanistic literacy for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

At present, the cultivation of medical students' humanistic literacy based on volunteer service in nursing homes is still in the exploratory stage, and many ideas need to be improved. We believe that there will be more standardized and effective cultivation methods in the future, and we look forward to colleagues continuing to work hard to study them.

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