

Preventive Nursing, Community Engagement, Health Promotion: The Pathway to Improving Health Care in Nigeria

Legborsi Robinson-Mbato

(RN, RM, BNSC, PGDE, M.SC., PHD. IN VIEW)

Department of Nursing, Rivers State University, Nigeria

doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/bjmas.2022.0426>

Published February 23, 2023

Citation: Robinson-Mbato L. (2024) Preventive Nursing, Community Engagement, Health Promotion: The Pathway to Improving Health Care in Nigeria, British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Health and Medical Sciences 5 (1),31-50

ABSTRACT: *The article explores the many obstacles that the Nigerian healthcare system encounters and suggests a holistic strategy that includes preventive nursing, health promotion, and community participation to improve healthcare provision. The research underscores the significance of community participation, emphasising its function in cultivating a feeling of affiliation and possession, as well as establishing a connection between the community and healthcare programmes. The text extensively examines the notion of preventative nursing, highlighting its multiple character as both a specialised nursing practice and a subject rooted in public health. The objectives and constituents of preventive nursing are delineated, highlighting its function in timely identification, proactive interventions, and its influence on national health results. Health promotion is presented as a vital component of healthcare reforms, with the goal of enabling people to make knowledgeable decisions about their well-being. The article outlines the objectives of health promotion, with a particular focus on minimising risk factors and encouraging a proactive approach to maintaining good health. The text discusses strategies for efficacious health promotion in Nigeria, including the engagement of community leaders and the use of both conventional and digital approaches. The text examines the notion of community participation, characterising it as a multifaceted and all-encompassing process that entails a dynamic interchange of ideas and resources among many stakeholders. The research highlights the significance of active community engagement in decision-making processes, emphasising its role in fostering inclusivity and collaborative decision-making. The paper finishes by underscoring the crucial significance of nurses in the domains of preventive nursing, health promotion, and community involvement. This highlights the need of adopting a comprehensive and interdisciplinary strategy to tackle the difficulties encountered by the healthcare system in Nigeria. The report promotes urgent and cooperative measures, emphasising the potential of the suggested ways to improve healthcare in Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: Preventive Nursing, Community Engagement, Health Promotion, Health Care

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian health care system is afflicted by a multitude of issues on almost every front. The challenges encompass medical tourism, insufficient infrastructure and facilities, manpower scarcity, limited government budget allocation, inadequate compensation, emigration of skilled professionals, and the issue of illiterate and uninformed patients, particularly in rural areas (KPA, 2022). In 2021, a mere 5% of the Federal budget was allocated to health care. In 2023, the Federal government allotted just 5.75% of the total sum, which is equivalent to \$1.17 trillion, to the health sector. Interestingly, this is the largest ever allocation to the industry in the nation's history. Regrettably, it did not fulfil the requirement of the Abuja Declaration of the African Union (AU), which mandated the allocation of 15% of their budgets to the health sector (Premium Times, 2023).

Once again, the health care system is intricate, and the field of health care is growing more competitive and constantly evolving. The motivation for this change stems from the exorbitant expenses associated with healthcare, which has led many Nigerians to opt for traditional medicine or self-medication. Additionally, advancements in technology and shifts in demographics and diseases, influenced by social and economic factors such as occupational hazards, accidents, and environmental factors, have contributed to the need for this change. Moreover, a significant proportion of individuals throughout their whole lives face a scarcity of affordable healthcare services owing to exorbitant expenses and restricted availability, compounded by public apprehensions over the quality of treatment. Furthermore, in the present day, individuals who use health services are embracing health-oriented principles that embrace both physical and mental well-being as well as the overall standard of living. They are actively engaging in health measures to avoid and restore diseases, while also making changes to their behaviour to improve and sustain their health (Ezeoke, et al., 2012). The notion of illness treatment is being replaced by preventative healthcare, as efficient prevention measures are becoming more popular.

All of these circumstances indicate that the Nigerian health system is severely compromised and requires urgent care to prevent its total collapse. Furthermore, it demonstrates that health care consumers are actively endorsing and using the many care services and programmes that encourage well-being, illness prevention, and recovery. Moreover, according to accessible reports, approximately 41 million individuals perish annually due to avoidable non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancers. These diseases account for approximately 74% of global deaths. By the year 2030, it is estimated that around 39 million deaths could be prevented if all countries are aware of and implement effective interventions. The United Nations Agency strongly advises individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles and modify risky behaviours in order to decrease their likelihood of developing life-threatening illnesses and increase their life expectancy. Three primary approaches to

reengineering the healthcare industry in Nigeria for the purpose of enhancing healthcare are preventive nursing, health promotion, and community involvement.

Preventive nursing involves nurses offering evidence-based advice to individuals, families, communities, and the general public about the need of adopting preventive measures such as screening, counselling, and prophylactic drugs. As per Bradley University (2023), preventive care refers to taking action before the occurrence of sickness or injury in order to enhance the overall health and lifespan of people, families, and the community beyond what would have been possible without such care. Universal healthcare ensures the well-being of the population, resulting in decreased healthcare expenses for individuals. Additionally, it bolsters the economy by enabling a significant portion of the workforce to stay in excellent physical condition and make valuable contributions to national progress. Furthermore, it has the potential to assist older adults in maintaining optimal health.

Health promotion is a component of healthcare. Health promotion, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2016), is the provision of education and motivation to empower people to enhance and assume more responsibility for their own health. Health practitioners must enable the community to adopt behaviours that may reduce their susceptibility to illnesses. Health promotion encompasses many phases, including the identification and mitigation of risk factors such as unhealthy dietary habits, the early diagnosis and management of symptoms related to illnesses or diseases, and the addressing of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. This is of utmost significance since the World Health Organisation (WHO) has calculated that one out of every eight individuals (1 in 8) succumbs to mental diseases. Consequently, it is crucial for nurses to provide the population with knowledge about self-care practices.

Community involvement refers to a purposeful connection between communities and public officials with their health concerns. There are two tactics available for implementing community engagement: conventional methods include in-person meetings with community leaders and important stakeholders, and discussing with them how to avoid illnesses and promote good health. Another alternative is via digital methods. Online or virtual meetings and awareness campaigns will be necessary, using media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Twitter (now X), and others.

The current focus is on promoting health and ensuring that great healthcare is accessible to everyone. Nurses play a prominent role as healthcare professionals who are primarily responsible for imparting essential health information to patients, clients, and the community. This information is tailored to address diverse health needs based on factors such as residence, work environment, available resources, and individual preferences (WHO, 2018). It is vital to include both professionals and non-professional direct care providers who actively engage in

establishing user-friendly and comprehensive health initiatives to guarantee overall protection of public health. This study aims to analyse preventative nursing, health promotion, and community participation as ways for enhancing the Nigerian healthcare system.

Concept of Preventive Nursing

Preventive Nursing is a progressive and developing discipline in healthcare that emphasises a proactive approach to managing health. Essentially, this field aims to enhance the health and welfare of people and communities by using solutions that are supported by evidence. A fundamental principle of this organisation is the advocacy for preventative services, including activities such as screenings, prophylactic drugs, and counselling. These services have the objective of early detection of health hazards, prevention of the start of diseases, and enhancement of general well-being.

The complex nature of preventative nursing is seen in its characterization as both a specialised nursing practice and a discipline grounded in public health. Nikku and Eriksson (2012) highlight the importance of providing high-quality healthcare to people, communities, and vulnerable groups. This entails participating in proactive measures and health promotion endeavours that effectively manage and improve general well-being, avoid the onset of illnesses and impairments, and eventually decrease death rates. Preventive nursing is not limited to a particular environment; instead, it encompasses a wide range of locations and situations. Professionals in this domain are present in primary healthcare, environmental and occupational health, administration, finance, as well as governmental and international organisations. Their responsibilities involve not just providing direct treatment to patients but also doing research, teaching, and evaluating health programmes. The flexibility of preventative nursing enables it to effectively tackle health issues at both the individual and community levels.

Preventive nurses use a variety of tactics, such as education, counselling, and targeted treatments, to address particular factors that influence health. This all-encompassing strategy encompasses various endeavours, including guaranteeing availability of uncontaminated potable water, executing widespread immunisation campaigns to eliminate contagious illnesses, advocating for proper hand cleanliness, carrying out regular cancer examinations, and consistently enhancing health instruction to foster healthier habits. The concrete effects of preventative nursing are seen at a national level. Effective nationwide preventative programmes have effectively mitigated environmentally-induced illnesses, such as lead poisoning and lung cancer, therefore safeguarding millions of persons from these detrimental health hazards (KPA, 2022). This highlights the importance of proactive nursing in its contribution to the wider public health agenda.

Preventive nurse experts, with expertise in biostatistics, epidemiology, health care planning, and assessment, have a crucial impact on the formation and reformation of health systems. They

possess a breadth of knowledge and skills that go beyond providing medical treatment, including doing research and revitalising healthcare systems with an emphasis on preventative measures. These professionals prioritise proactive health management by placing emphasis on preventing sickness, damage, and death, so contributing to the creation of a healthcare landscape. Nurses, as pivotal participants in proactive healthcare endeavours, assume a major position in the dissemination of knowledge and provision of guidance. Preventive nursing has expanded its reach beyond conventional face-to-face contacts. It has embraced the digital world by offering advice via telehealth services and health applications. The extensive scope of preventive nursing interventions allows for their implementation across many demographics, hence fostering health and well-being on a larger level (Chan & Benecki 2013). In summary, preventative nursing is a crucial and ever-changing aspect of healthcare that tackles health issues at the individual, community, and societal levels using a comprehensive and research-backed method.

Goals of Preventive Nursing

Preventive nursing is a comprehensive strategy focused on protecting the health and welfare of people, communities, and populations. One of its main objectives is to safeguard the well-being and survival of individuals. Preventive nursing aims to detect and reduce possible health concerns before they become major issues by applying proactive measures and treatments. This is the identification of environmental variables, lifestyle choices, and genetic predispositions that might potentially contribute to health problems. This enables nurses to devise strategies aimed at reducing these risks.

Preventive nursing not only aims to save health but also strives to foster optimal well-being. This entails not just attending to current health concerns but also actively participating in endeavours to promote good health. Nurses have a vital function in providing education to people and communities on healthy lifestyle choices, illness prevention, and the need of frequent health checkups (Bratati 2018). Preventive nursing endeavours to cultivate a culture that promotes health, with the goal of enabling people to assume responsibility for their well-being and make well-informed choices that have a beneficial effect on their overall health. Preventive nursing also aims to prioritise the preservation of the recipients' health and overall well-being. This extends beyond the resolution of particular health issues and include the ongoing evaluation and assistance of persons' general health condition. Preventive nursing treatments including routine examinations, vaccinations, and guidance on dietary habits and physical activity. Preventive nursing seeks to improve the quality of life for people and communities by addressing the wider dimensions of health and well-being. Moreover, the objective of preventive nursing is to avert the occurrence of illness, impairment, and mortality. Nurses aim to identify and treat health disorders in their early stages, when they are easier to control, by using early detection, prompt interventions, and health education. Nurses play a crucial role in mitigating the impact of illnesses by avoiding their occurrence or advancement

(GRANICUS 2023). This not only alleviates the strain on healthcare systems but also enhances the overall well-being of persons and, eventually, leads to life preservation.

Preventive nursing aims to achieve several objectives, including safeguarding, advancing, and sustaining health, while actively striving to avert the onset of illnesses, impairments, and mortality. Preventive nursing significantly contributes to improving the well-being of people and communities by addressing health risks, encouraging healthy behaviours, and delivering comprehensive care.

Levels of Preventative Nursing

Preventive nursing is crucial in preserving and improving the overall health of people and communities. The system functions on many tiers, with each one targeting certain facets of promoting well-being and preventing illnesses. Primary Preventive Nursing is a discipline that prioritises equipping people with information and preventive strategies to avoid the occurrence of illnesses and accidents (Ezeoke et al., 2012). Secondary Preventive Nursing goes beyond mere prevention by intervening at an early stage to achieve early identification and treatment, with the goal of stopping the development of illnesses. Finally, Tertiary Preventive Nursing intervenes when patients are already impacted, prioritising rehabilitation and tactics to avert more impairment or diminished functionality in those with chronic and terminal diseases.

Primary preventive nursing aims to promote health and avoid the occurrence of illnesses, injuries, and deaths in the community. The focus of nursing care is to provide patients with the essential knowledge and abilities to sustain a state of good health. This entails instructional endeavours that include a wide range of domains, such as households, educational institutions, communal locations, and professional environments. The focus is on implementing targeted preventive measures, including the dissemination of information through educational initiatives, facilitating immunisation programmes, promoting environmental sanitation practices, preventing accidents, ensuring access to safe drinking water, conducting inspections of food vendors, and safeguarding against occupational hazards. In addition, behaviour therapy is used to promote lifestyle changes by addressing significant health risk factors such as smoking, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, an unhealthy diet, and drug misuse (Haldane et al., 2019).

Secondary preventive nursing emphasises the timely identification and treatment of illnesses in order to avoid their dissemination. This level of nursing care includes routine medical examinations, health screenings designed to detect first indications of conditions such as obesity and cancer, and the tracking of persons who have come into contact with contagious illnesses. Secondary prevention focuses on the early detection and treatment of problems in order to reduce the effect and advancement of diseases, leading to better overall health outcomes for the community.

Tertiary preventative nursing is implemented when persons are already afflicted by sickness. The main objective at this stage is to assist patients in maximising their remaining abilities, so promoting their engagement and satisfaction in life via the process of rehabilitation. This degree of care is particularly applicable to those suffering from chronic and terminal illnesses such as Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, or cancer. The primary objective is to avoid more handicap or diminished functionality by imparting guidance on properly managing these disorders. Tertiary preventive nursing aims to halt the progression of physical and mental decline, promoting a holistic approach to improving the quality of life for patients coping with chronic and terminal diseases (Bratati 2018).

Components of Preventive Nursing

Preventive nursing is a comprehensive approach to healthcare, with the goal of identifying and managing possible health hazards before they develop into more severe ailments. An essential element is providing education to people on hazardous behaviours that might have a substantial influence on their health. This involves providing education and raising awareness about the harmful consequences of smoking, alcohol addiction, substance misuse, and unhealthy eating behaviours. Preventive nursing aims to educate patients in a focused manner, enabling them to make educated decisions that enhance their overall health and minimise the likelihood of acquiring avoidable health problems.

Health promotion is a crucial component of preventive nursing. This entails promoting a proactive stance towards health, prioritising favourable lifestyle decisions, and developing behaviours that enhance general well-being (Bradley University 2023). Nurses have a crucial role in advocating for and encouraging healthy behaviours, including consistent physical activity, a well-balanced diet, effective stress management, and sufficient sleep. Preventive nursing endeavours to provide a basis for optimum well-being and diminish the occurrence of lifestyle-related disorders by prioritising health promotion.

Cancer screenings are an essential part of preventative nursing interventions. Early detection of cancers, such as cervical, colon, and breast cancer, significantly improves their treatability. Preventive nursing entails promoting and enabling frequent testing for these malignancies in order to detect any irregularities or possible indicators at an early stage. Nurses play a crucial role in enhancing results and lessening the effects of cancer on people and communities by actively encouraging early diagnosis via screenings.

Regular examinations and periodic health evaluations are crucial components in the armoury of preventative nursing. These examinations may include blood tests to evaluate cholesterol levels and blood pressure, offering crucial information about the likelihood of developing cardiovascular problems. Early identification of these risk factors enables prompt therapies and lifestyle adjustments that may effectively avoid the onset or advancement of cardiovascular

problems. In addition, regular exams provide an opportunity to detect different illnesses at an early stage, allowing for timely and efficient treatment.

Childhood and adult immunisations are crucial for reducing the transmission of contagious illnesses and safeguarding people from severe repercussions. Preventive nursing include promoting and delivering immunisations that provide transient protection against many diseases. Nurses play a crucial role in promoting community-wide immunity and preventing the spread of infectious illnesses and their repercussions by ensuring that people, particularly children, obtain the appropriate vaccines (Farlex 2012).

Ultimately, preventative nursing is a comprehensive strategy that includes instruction, health advocacy, examinations, assessments, and vaccinations. Preventive nursing is essential for promoting the well-being of individuals and communities by addressing different health issues and proactively detecting and reducing risks. Nurses, being at the forefront of healthcare, act as advocates and educators, encouraging patients to assume control over their well-being and prevent the occurrence of preventable health problems.

Importance of Preventive Nursing

Preventive nursing is essential in the healthcare system since it emphasises therapeutic treatments, preventive education, and consultative actions. This comprehensive strategy enables people, families, communities, and society to not only get favourable health results but also sustain them in the long run (O'Doneell 1986). Preventive nursing aims to proactively address health, therefore shifting the approach from reactive care to a more sustainable and cost-effective model.

An essential component of preventive nursing is the use of research to detect possible health risks and environmental hazards among people and communities. Nurses may use this evidence-based approach to work together with appropriate authorities in order to rectify these problems and establish preventative programmes. By engaging in this partnership, preventative nursing plays a crucial role in enhancing public health by tackling fundamental determinants that might give rise to a range of health issues(Ruth et al., 2019).

Furthermore, preventative nursing disrupts the chain of cause and effect by implementing educational interventions at various points throughout the progression of illnesses. Nurses strive to sensitise huge populations in order to remove, eliminate, or reduce the effect of illnesses, thereby slowing down their advancement. Implementing this proactive strategy not only alleviates the strain on the healthcare system but also improves the overall well-being of people and communities by avoiding the development of more serious illnesses.

The assessment and management of preventative healthcare are essential elements of preventative nursing, exerting a substantial influence on healthcare provision and health results. When properly implemented, preventive measures not only safeguard persons from possible health hazards but also promote the maintenance and enhancement of general health. Consequently, this results in a more robust society, alleviating the burden on healthcare resources and favourably impacting the overall welfare of communities.

To summarise, the significance of proactive nursing cannot be exaggerated. This approach is comprehensive and forward-thinking, since it considers health from several perspectives, ranging from individual welfare to the wider society framework. preventative nursing plays a crucial role in promoting a healthy population and ensuring the sustainability of the healthcare system via its emphasis on therapeutic treatments, preventative education, and evidence-based techniques (Patricia et al., 2019).

Role of the Nurses in Preventive Nursing

Nurses have a vital role in the field of preventative nursing, assuming many duties to promote and maintain health and wellness. An essential function is that of a pedagogue. Nurses engage in discussions including a broad spectrum of avoidable health subjects, with the objective of enabling people to take charge of their own health. The emphasis on health promotion is seen in the prioritisation of this area in the International Taxonomy of the NANDA nursing diagnosis (NANDA International & Herdman, 2012). Nurses engage in dialogues to convey knowledge on early indications and symptoms of illnesses, the significance of proper nourishment, consistent physical activity, and the adoption of safe sexual practices.

The nurse's role in preventative nursing includes a crucial emphasis on health promotion. Nurses enable people, families, and communities to make educated choices that support a healthy lifestyle by providing them with pertinent information. This include recommendations for consistent physical activity, maintaining a healthy body weight, managing pre-existing medical conditions, and refraining from detrimental behaviours such as smoking and substance misuse. In addition, nurses highlight the significance of consuming alcohol in moderation, which aids in the prevention of addiction and certain forms of cancer. Another crucial responsibility of nurses in preventative nursing is the prompt detection of high-risk clients or patients (Patrcia et al., 2019). Nurses, being in close contact to the population, are in a favourable position to identify harmful behaviours such as unhealthy eating habits, smoking, alcohol addiction, and drug misuse. Early detection enables prompt intervention and preventative actions, hence decreasing the probability of illness progression and health-related problems.

Nurses, in their role as carers, function as frontline professionals, diligently observing and overseeing indicators and manifestations of illnesses. Being in close contact to patients allows them to promptly identify health concerns and provide preventive measures to impede the

development of full-fledged disorders. This proactive strategy is in line with the preventative aspect of nursing, highlighting the need of timely identification and action. Nurses not only directly engage with clients but also provide access to healthcare services. Their role is to educate health consumers about available preventive health treatments, such as screening and immunisation. Nurses play a crucial role in preventative healthcare by providing guidance to clients on their health requirements and facilitating their access to essential services(WHO, 2016).

Nurse's involvement in preventative nursing includes advocacy as an additional aspect of their duty. Nurses, with their experience and professional competence, have the ability to actively assist in community initiatives at all levels in order to advance public health. Nurses play a crucial role in promoting a healthier and more knowledgeable society by supporting policies and activities that improve preventative measures. To summarise, nurses in preventive nursing have a diverse range of responsibilities including providing education, promoting health, identifying persons at risk, monitoring and treating symptoms, enabling healthcare access, and advocating for patients. Nurses have a crucial role in promoting a culture of prevention, by encouraging people and communities to make choices that result in better health and well-being.

Concept of Health Promotion

Health promotion has been a significant aspect of health care changes, gaining considerable traction in recent years. O'Donnell (1986) provides a definition of health promotion as the systematic use of scientific knowledge and artistic skills to assist individuals in modifying their lifestyle choices in order to achieve a condition of optimum health. Health promotion is the act of instructing and motivating individuals to assume more authority over and enhance their health (WHO, 2018). This practice aids in reducing mortality rates, addressing the fundamental factors that influence health, and mitigating major risk factors. Additionally, it contributes to the reinforcement of sustainable health systems. The source cited is from the World Health Organisation in 2018.

Health promotion prioritises preventive measures to enhance quality of life, decrease healthcare expenses, and mitigate premature mortality. In order to do this, it is anticipated that individuals who get health benefits actively engage in and commit to adopting particular health behaviours. This will help enhance their current and future state of well-being while reducing their susceptibility to sickness and illnesses (Patricia, et. al., 2019). This is of utmost significance due to the fact that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has projected that one out of every eight individuals (1 in 8) succumb to mental diseases.

These occurrences are contingent upon the establishment and execution of robust laws and policies that specifically target the fundamental requirements for maintaining good health, such as ensuring access to sufficient food, adequate housing, job opportunities with favourable

working conditions, a stable income, sustainable resources, and promoting social justice and fairness. Health promotion methods include several strategies, such as mitigating risk factors such as unhealthy dietary habits, detecting early indications of illnesses or diseases, and managing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, among others.

Consequently, it is crucial for nurses to provide the community with information and instruction on self-care practices. The role of health practitioners is to empower the community in making lifestyle choices that may reduce their susceptibility to illnesses (Ruth et al., 2019).

Health promotion methods include a range of strategies designed to improve general well-being and avoid the occurrence of illnesses. The behavioural approach posits that altering the behaviour of a tiny portion of the population may result in a substantial transformation in the wider society (Patricia et al., 2019). This method focuses on people or groups who are confronted with certain social and behavioural difficulties that make them susceptible to adopting unhealthy lifestyles. Health education and awareness programmes are vital elements of the behavioural approach, aiming to cultivate favourable behaviours and enhance the general health of the community. The socio-environmental approach to health promotion aims to tackle the social factors that influence health outcomes. These determinants include elements such as housing, job, food accessibility, social isolation, and addiction. Health promotion practitioners strive to create a conducive environment for people and communities by focusing on these factors. Activities linked to this strategy include community development endeavours, lobbying for governmental policies that advance health, and endeavours to establish surroundings that foster well-being, such as afforestation and pollution reduction (Ruth et al., 2019).

The use of the preventative medical approach is a conventional method implemented within the health sector. The objective is to improve physiological risk factors by using medical procedures to prevent and cure illnesses. This strategy includes regular screenings, immunisations, and other medical procedures aimed at addressing particular health concerns. Although essential, the preventive medical approach is but one aspect of a holistic health promotion plan. The harm-minimization method aims to reduce the negative outcomes associated with engaging in risky behaviours. This strategy aims to mitigate the consequences of dangerous behaviours on health, society, and the economy, acknowledging that some people may continue to engage in such activities despite being educated and provided with preventative measures. Illustrations include harm reduction measures for risky sexual activities and substance misuse. The primary objective of the harm-minimization method is to enable people to exert more authority over their well-being, while recognising the enduring presence of certain behaviours that involve taking risks (Premium Times 2023).

Health promotion methods include a comprehensive strategy that integrates behavioural, socio-environmental, preventive medical, and harm-minimization measures. Health promotion seeks

to enhance overall health and well-being at both the individual and community levels by targeting individual behaviours, social determinants of health, physiological risk factors, and the repercussions of risky behaviours.

Goals of Health Promotion

Health promotion is a comprehensive strategy aimed at improving the overall welfare of people and communities (O'Donnell 1986). The major objectives of health promotion may be classified into several categories. First and foremost, its primary objective is to provide the people with education on health advice, offering information that enables individuals to make well-informed choices about their well-being. This instruction covers a broad spectrum of subjects, including preventative actions and lifestyle choices that promote a better life.

Another crucial objective is to deter hazardous behaviours, such as smoking, substance misuse, and obesity. Health promotion aims to decrease the occurrence of these hazards in the population by raising knowledge about the harmful consequences of these behaviours. It is crucial to promote self-care practices, highlighting the significance of people assuming responsibility for their health by adopting proactive and preventative acts. Mental health is a crucial aspect of total well-being, and health promotion aims to enhance mental health throughout the whole community (Patricia et al 2019). This entails diminishing social stigma, enhancing awareness, and offering resources for the provision of mental health assistance. In addition, health promotion endeavours to reduce the occurrence of infectious diseases by implementing many preventative strategies, including immunisations, advocating for cleanliness behaviours, and enhancing knowledge about communicable disorders.

The primary goal is to promote optimal health and well-being among the population. This encompasses not only the prevention of illnesses but also the promotion of favourable health outcomes and behaviours that contribute to total well-being. Promoting a healthy lifestyle via education is crucial, since it encourages the adoption of behaviours that improve physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The World Health Organisation (2018) has established a comprehensive framework that outlines the fundamental principles of health promotion. The cornerstone of successful health promotion methods lies in good governance, policy enhancement, the availability of healthy options, health literacy, the use of multiple tactics, empowerment, holistic viewpoints, active involvement, cooperation across sectors, fairness, and sustainability.

The Ottawa Charter (1986) delineates precise measures for the improvement of health. The process of re-orienting health services requires a collective endeavour from people, communities, healthcare professionals, and governmental/non-governmental institutions to establish a health system that places the highest importance on the total welfare of the community. The concept of building healthy public policy underscores the need of formulating

policies that take into account the impact on health and actively encourage measures that enhance social policies, health, and income.

Establishing a conducive atmosphere acknowledges the complex connection between individuals and their environment. Health promotion aims to cultivate favourable living and working situations, while also addressing the evolving trends in lifestyle, employment, and recreational activities. Enhancing community action is crucial for the success of health promotion programmes, since it depends on the active participation of the community in decision-making, planning, and execution to get improved health results. Ultimately, the acquisition of personal skills via education and support networks enables people to successfully manage their health and surroundings (Ruth et al., 2019).

To summarise, the objectives of health promotion are extensive and interrelated, spanning education, modification of behaviour, enhancement of mental health, avoidance of diseases, and general improvement of well-being. The techniques described in the Ottawa Charter provide a clear plan for executing all-encompassing health promotion efforts that target individual, community, and societal dimensions.

Strategies for effective Health Promotion in Nigeria

Efficient health promotion techniques in Nigeria are essential for tackling public health issues and enhancing general well-being. A conventional method is conducting individual conversations with influential individuals inside communities. Interacting with these powerful individuals enables the spread of health information in a way that is attuned to cultural sensitivities. Opinion leaders play a crucial role in connecting health authorities with community people, promoting trust and enhancing the chances of adopting healthy health behaviours. Advocacy is a crucial approach for promoting health effectively in Nigeria. Through harnessing the backing of powerful people or organisations, such as community leaders, celebrities, or esteemed experts, health promotion messages may acquire credibility and wider acceptability. Advocacy endeavours may be enhanced via a range of media outlets, such as print media, electronic media, and social media platforms, enabling the dissemination of information to a wide array of people around the nation (KPA, 2022).

Mediation serves as a means to resolve any conflicts that may arise between traditional beliefs and contemporary health treatments. In Nigeria, cultural norms and traditional practices often shape health behaviours. In this context, mediators play a crucial role in promoting interaction between healthcare practitioners and community people, therefore developing mutual comprehension and cooperation. This method facilitates the alignment of health promotion programmes with local cultures and beliefs. Group consultation is a very successful approach for addressing broader parts of the community. By conducting health education seminars in communities, businesses, or social organisations, knowledge may be spread to a wider audience.

This strategy fosters peer-to-peer dialogues and support networks, fostering a feeling of shared accountability for one's health and well-being.

Seminars and conferences provide opportunities for comprehensive conversations on health-related subjects. These events enable the convergence of specialists, decision-makers, and members of the community to disseminate expertise, engage in the interchange of ideas, and develop all-encompassing strategies for health promotion. Seminars and conferences in Nigeria facilitate cooperation and networking, leading to the creation of evidence-based solutions that effectively tackle particular health concerns. Health promotion activities are expanded via orientation campaigns that are delivered through door-to-door visits, in religious centres, and in schools. Health educators may customise information to meet the particular requirements of a community by actively interacting with persons in their daily contexts. Conducting orientations from one home to another enables personalised encounters, ensuring that health messages are culturally appropriate and readily comprehensible.

Ultimately, a comprehensive strategy for promoting health in Nigeria is crucial in order to effectively meet the varied requirements of its populace. The integration of conventional approaches with contemporary communication platforms, including influential figures within the community, and tailoring techniques to fit specific local circumstances will enhance the effectiveness of health promotion endeavours, eventually resulting in enhanced public health outcomes throughout the nation.

Concept of Community Engagement

Community involvement is a complex and inclusive process that enables people to actively influence the choices and policies that affect their lives and overall welfare (Farlex 2012). The process entails a fluid interchange of ideas, information, and resources across diverse stakeholders, such as healthcare practitioners and people or groups that possess similar qualities related to concerns, location, or identity (Centre for Disease Prevention, 2008). The primary objective of community involvement is to cultivate a robust society via the promotion of cooperation, inclusiveness, and collective decision-making. An essential element of community engagement is the active participation of individuals in the decision-making procedures that have an impact on them. This entails not just identifying matters of interest but also actively engaging in the development and execution of policies. By adopting a participative approach, the opinions, needs, and goals of the community are taken into account, resulting in solutions that are both more effective and sustainable. According to Haldane et al. (2019), community participation necessitates the allocation of specific resources such as time, personnel, expertise, and financial support to effectively tackle its intricate nature and requirements.

There are two main approaches to carrying out community engagement: conventional in-person gatherings and digital methods. Conventional methods include engaging directly with

community leaders, important stakeholders, and different defined groups. This technique facilitates comprehensive talks, fosters interpersonal connections, and promotes a deeper understanding of community dynamics. Conversely, digital methods like as online meetings and awareness campaigns on popular social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Twitter provide a way to reach a wider audience and enhance accessibility, particularly in the context of the contemporary digital era.

An essential element of effective community involvement is the recognition and inclusion of pivotal persons and groups in the process. It is crucial to include paramount rulers, chiefs, family heads, elders, community development committees, youth leaders, teachers, religious leaders, and members of socio-cultural organisations. These people and organisations often possess substantial sway within the community and may have crucial roles in promoting efficient communication, cultivating trust, and mobilising community members towards shared objectives.

Community involvement is a comprehensive and cooperative strategy that acknowledges the significance of including everyone in decision-making procedures, fostering inclusion, and addressing the distinct requirements of communities. Community involvement, whether in person or online, aims to enable people and groups to actively contribute to the development of a stronger and more resilient society. By identifying and engaging influential community leaders, the success of these initiatives may be further enhanced via the use of pre-existing social structures and networks.

Community participation is crucial for cultivating a feeling of belonging and ownership among participants, establishing a link between the community and the implemented programmes. When people have a strong personal commitment to a programme, it is more likely to be successful because they feel a sense of pride in their contributions. The feeling of own something not only gives community members a sense of authority, but also guarantees that the efforts are in line with their requirements and preferences (Ezeoke et al., 2012).

Furthermore, active involvement of the community greatly enhances the level of participation in matters pertaining to health, hence improving the quality, pertinence, and efficacy of healthcare treatments. By engaging the community in decision-making processes, healthcare practitioners get vital perspectives on the local environment, enabling them to customise their services to the unique requirements of the population. This individualised strategy enhances the overall health results and tackles the distinct obstacles encountered by the community. Community participation has the advantage of improved communication. Through the establishment of transparent channels of communication, healthcare professionals may efficiently distribute vital information, resulting in enhanced health literacy among the

population. Consequently, this enables people to make well-informed choices about their health and promotes a proactive approach to obtaining healthcare.

Community participation is essential for mitigating ill health within a community and enhancing overall community health. Through the active engagement of community people in health promotion and preventive initiatives, the probability of early detection and mitigation of health hazards is enhanced. This proactive strategy helps to the promotion of a more robust community, by minimising the transmission of illnesses and alleviating the strain on healthcare institutions. In addition, community participation fosters self-sufficiency and long-term viability. Enabling communities to assume control over their health not only fosters a feeling of accountability but also guarantees the long-term viability of the adopted programmes. Communities that actively participate in healthcare activities are more inclined to establish and sustain their health infrastructure, resulting in enduring enhancements in health outcomes (Ezeoke et al., 2012).

Addressing cultural obstacles to healthcare is another important aspect of community participation. Local communities may possess distinctive cultural customs and convictions that might influence their perspectives on healthcare. Interacting with the community enables healthcare workers to comprehend and respect these cultural subtleties, so promoting culturally sensitive and inclusive healthcare services. Community participation facilitates the mobilisation of labour and resources in a timely manner to meet healthcare demands. By engaging community people in healthcare efforts, there is an available reservoir of human resources that may contribute to the execution of programmes. Moreover, the community's capacity to assemble resources, including both manpower and materials, guarantees a swifter and more effective reaction to healthcare demands. Ultimately, community involvement fosters the development of leadership skills and the enhancement of capabilities in order to diminish disparities in health. Enabling people in the community to assume leadership positions not only improves their abilities but also strengthens the group's ability to tackle health inequalities. Implementing a bottom-up strategy facilitates the development of a robust healthcare system capable of efficiently addressing health disparities at the local level.

Improving Nigeria's Healthcare Through Preventive Nursing, Health Promotion and Community Engagement

The primary objectives of the Healthy People 2030 programme are to achieve optimal physical and mental well-being, devoid of avoidable illnesses, impairments, harm, and untimely mortality. Additionally, the effort aims to enhance health literacy and enhance the overall health and welfare of all individuals. The healthcare system in Nigeria necessitates the use of intersectoral and multidisciplinary methods. By adopting an integrated strategy that combines preventative nursing, community participation, and health promotion, the management of people's health may be significantly enhanced, leading to improvements in healthcare in Nigeria.

The nurse practitioner prioritises holistic care for individuals, patients, families, and communities in order to assure and encourage early identification of persons at risk of developing sickness and difficulties. This is achieved via frequent checks, screening, and counselling services. This serves as a preventive measure against the occurrence of diseases, ailments, and even mortality. Enhances individuals' general health and well-being, as shown by the adoption of good habits, longer lifespan, improved job productivity, and the ability of older adults to retain independence and have a heightened feeling of well-being.

Health is a fundamental principle in the field of nursing (WHO, 2016). Nurse practitioners enable healthcare recipients, including individuals, families, communities, and populations, to embrace preventative measures, promote healthy behaviours, and oversee their health via education, community engagement, screening, and monitoring. This strategy fosters the development of robust communities, empowering individuals to take responsibility for their well-being and implement essential modifications for a more salubrious existence, eventually resulting in enhanced healthcare.

The nurse practitioner collaborates with healthcare consumers and stakeholders. Their role includes evaluating the effects of policies and strategies on healthcare, devising and executing policies, conducting assessments of policies, and evaluating policies for improvement. These measures bolster the formulation of healthcare policies to increase the overall health and well-being of the general population.

Preventive nurses work with people, families, communities, organisations, and stakeholders, use their acquired skills, experience, and competence. They establish connections, cultivate and maintain work initiatives and initiatives, guarantee the representation of members, advocate on their behalf, and provide the media with material to distribute health and wellness knowledge to a vast populace. These endeavours contribute to enhanced healthcare.

Preventive nurses with leadership and management abilities develop educational initiatives aimed at emphasising the importance and need of health and well-being. Their role is to guarantee that learning programmes effectively guide individuals towards their targeted objectives. They accomplish this by advocating, planning, delivering, and assessing the learning programmes (Chan & Benecki 2013).

Health promotion initiatives and assistance programmes enhance positive health-related behaviours and practices, particularly among susceptible populations (such as children, the elderly, adolescents, and women). These activities enhance understanding of factors that influence health outcomes and effective strategies to tackle health problems, enabling individuals, families, communities, and populations to enhance their well-being (Ezeoke et al., 2012).

Health promotion employs evidence-based strategies to establish a conducive healthcare environment, fosters engagement from multiple sectors, and forms partnerships with both governmental and non-governmental organisations to design and implement comprehensive processes and programmes that promote active involvement, cooperative partnerships, effective coordination, and thorough evaluation to improve overall health. This enables individuals to assume accountability by using gained knowledge and information, in order to avert sickness, ailments, and mortality while enhancing overall health.

Involving community members in the process of identifying and prioritising health needs allows us to gain a better understanding of their needs. This approach also helps to reduce tension and overcome any resistance to change that they may have. Furthermore, it empowers and motivates community members to take action and become active participants in the desired intervention. Additionally, it improves cooperation between different agencies and strengthens partnerships for health development. This leads to the implementation of coordinated strategies for health processes and programmes that effectively fulfil the necessary requirements, hence mitigating health disparities and enhancing overall well-being (Bratati 2018).

Health promotion strategies mitigate the prevalence of infectious illnesses such as STDs, HIV/AIDS, and COVID-19, as well as accidental injuries such slips and accidents. Additionally, these treatments address mental ill-health causes, cancer risk factors, and risk-taking behaviours. They establish a conducive atmosphere by using stress reduction techniques, cultivating positive interpersonal connections, making adjustments to one's way of life, and encouraging engagement in physical activities. These treatments have a substantial impact on enhancing health-related behaviours and mitigating risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease.

Effective health promotion initiatives, which encourage changes in lifestyle and behaviour, serve to avoid sickness, diabetes, and mortality. Regular physical exercise in older adults significantly decreases the likelihood of experiencing falls, injuries, and chronic conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer, while also being very cost-effective. The decrease in healthcare expenses and responsibilities is advantageous for both customers and the healthcare system.

CONCLUSION

As healthcare advances, nurses remain crucial in providing patient care and preventing diseases to improve healthcare in Nigeria. These goals are accomplished via various strategies that enable people and communities to proactively avoid illnesses, resulting in improved overall health and well-being. This study investigated the potential use of preventive nursing, health promotion, and community participation as techniques to enhance the healthcare system in Nigeria. Undoubtedly, the Nigerian healthcare industry is in a precarious state, requiring immediate and

collaborative action from all parties involved. In light of the current circumstances, it is important to acknowledge that if no substantial action is taken in the near future, the system is at risk of deteriorating to a comatose condition. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritise preventive nursing, health promotion, and community engagement.

REFERENCES

- Bradley University (2023). What is preventative care? The role of nurses and health apps. <https://onlinedegree.bradley.edu/blog/what-is-preventative-care-ways-to-improve-it/>
- Bratati, B. (2018). Primary Health Care Nursing. *AITBS Publishers India*. Publish-Virender Kumar Arya for AITB
- Center for Disease Prevention (1998). 1998 Guidelines for Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Diseases. *Center for Disease Prevention*, 47, 1-118
- Chan, Y. E., & Benecki, L. A. (2013). Evaluating the success of a Hospital Community Engagement Processes. *Health Care MX Forum*, 26(1), 20-5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hcmf.2012.12.002>.
- Ezeoke, O. P., Onwujekwe, O. E., & Uzochukwu, B. S. (2012). Towards universal coverage: examining costs of illness, payment, and coping strategies to different population groups in southeast Nigeria. *Am J Trop Med Hyg.* 86(1), 52-7. <https://doi.org/10.4269/ajtmh.2012.11-0090>.
- Farlex, G. (2012). Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing. <https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/preventive+nursing>
- GRANICUS (2023). What is community engagement? <https://granicus.com/blog/what-is-community-engagement/>
- Haldane, V., Chuah, F. L. H., Srivastava, A., Singh, S. R., Koh, G. C. H., Seng, C. K., & Legido-Quigley, H. (2019). Community participation in health services development, implementation, and evaluation: A systematic review of empowerment, health, community, and process outcomes. *PLoS One*, 14(5). [Hhttps://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0216112](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0216112)
- KPA (2022). Major challenges in the health care system in Nigeria. <https://kpapakpa.com/major-challenges-in-the-healthcare-sector-in-nigeria/>
- NANDA International & Herdman, T. H. (2012). *NANDA International Nursing diagnoses: Definitions and classification*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Nikku, N., & Eriksson, B.E. (2012). *Preventive Medicine* (2nd Edition). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-373932-2.00162-9>.
- O'Donnell, M. P. (1986). Definition of Health Promotion. *American Journal of Health Promotion*. 1(1), 4-5. <https://doi.org/10.4278/0890-1171-1.1.4>
- Patricia, A. P., Anne, G. P., Patricia, A. S., & Amy, H. (2019). *Essentials for Nursing Practice* (9th edition). Elsevier.

Premium Times (2023). 2023 budget: Health gets highest allocation ever but fails to meet AU commitment. <https://www.premiuntimes.org.com>.

Ruth, F. C., Hirnle, C., & Christine, M. H. (2019). *Fundamentals of Nursing: Concepts and Competencies for Practice* (9th edition). Wolters Kluwer Health

World Health Organization, (2016). *Promoting health in the sustainable development goals*. <https://www.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/259183/WHO-NMH-PND-1eng.pdf;jsessionid=A66DE726C46BD53ADCF3229FF638FD16?sequence=1>

World Health Organization, (2018a), *Health impact assessment (HIA)*. <https://www.who.int/hia/evidence/doh/en/>

World Health Organization, (2018b), *Health promotion*. <https://www.who.int/healthpromotion/about/en/>