

The synergistic relationship of the Medical Model and Nursing Model in NC Public Health

Have you ever wondered why the Nursing Model is so important in NC Public Health?

The traditional Medical Model is a systematic process of diagnosis and treatment of illness where the licensed provider (PAs, NPs, MDs, and DOs) focuses on the defect, or dysfunction, within the patient. The medical history, physical examination, and tests provide the basis for the medical decision-making, diagnosis, and treatment of a specific condition. The Medical Model is thus primarily focused on the physical and biological aspects of diseases and conditions.

While also giving attention to the physical and biological aspects of a patient's condition, the Nursing model recognizes that there is more to human healing than simply setting bones and staunching blood loss. The Nursing Model recognizes how these physical and biological conditions affect the human being. The patient is perceived as a person relating to their environment and nursing care is directed toward all dimensions of the person (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual). Nursing care thus focuses on all dimensions, not just physical and biological.

So, where the Medical Model's interventions and plan of care might concentrate primarily on ordering treatments such as medication or surgery, the Nursing Model considers how the patient's condition is going to affect the whole person: their activities of daily living, self-care, ambulation, work, and care for family members. Nursing interventions and plans of care focus on the human element or normal human processes that will be affected by the condition.

Even though the emphasis of the medical model and the nursing model are quite different, both models recognize the importance of the medical, biological, and socio-ecological elements on the health of the client. And both models recognize the importance of prevention. The medical and nursing models work synergistically as two pieces of the same puzzle as the nursing model takes ownership of addressing the influence of medical, biological, and socio-ecological elements on the health of an individual, family, or community. As you think about the definition of Public health Nursing as the practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge from nursing, social, and public health sciences, it is easy to understand why public health nurses following the Nursing Model are vital contributors to executing North Carolina Public Health's mission to promote and contribute to the highest possible level of health for the people of North Carolina.

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Resources:

American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section (2013). *The definition and practice of public health nursing: A statement of the public health nursing section*. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association
<https://www.apha.org/~media/files/pdf/membergroups/phn/nursingdefinition.ashx>

Leng, S. (2013). The medical model versus the nursing model: a difference in philosophy. *Medpage Today's KevinMD blog*. <https://www.kevinmd.com/blog/2013/05/medical-model-nursing-model-difference-philosophy.html>

Medical Model vs. Nursing Model:

<https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/medical+model>