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Initiatives to increase the expertise of nurses working in childcare centers in Iwate Prefecture

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Applicable principle

Principle 9: A commitment to promoting sustainability through education

1. Background of the activity

Qualified nurses are recommended, but not mandatory in childcare centers. Childcare Guidelines for Nurseries do not clearly outline the roles of nurses in nurseries and kindergartens. They only state that “if nurses are on premises, they should apply their specialized knowledge” in their response to “Monitoring the health, growth, and development of children” and “Responding to diseases”.

Nursing in childcare centers entails many challenges. Nurses that work in childcare centers are required to have different knowledge and skills to those who work in medical institutions. However, as it stands, there are few opportunities for nurses to learn about the roles of nurses in nurseries and kindergartens during basic nursing education, and there is often only one nurse hired per childcare center. This makes it difficult for nurses to learn systematically. Many nurses have no experience in pediatric nursing and struggle with managing the health of children at childcare centers, but because they are the only nurse in the childcare center, they have no one to talk to. Some childcare center nurses feel the breadth of their duties is hindering them from fulfilling their professional role as a nurse to support the health of children. Many nurses leave the profession after a short period of time.

2. Progress of the activity

Against this backdrop, in 2013, a graduate of the Prefectural University (3rd year student), and an active nurse working in a nursery school established a group to organize study sessions. The objective of the study sessions was to “improve the knowledge and skills of specialists involved with children” and “create a network of nursery school nurses in Iwate Prefecture”. The sessions are run in such a way that participants actively engage in the training themselves instead of passively listening. In addition, a future goal is for nurses working in nursery schools to have an active role in planning and managing the study session.



(1) 2013 to 2014

開始2013年～2014年	
研修会の目的 小児にかかわる専門職としての知識と技術の向上 ⇒小児を専門とする医師または看護師に講義や演習を依頼	
発達障がいについて	● 講師 塩田 亮 東北大学小児看護学 教授
食物アレルギーについて	● 講師 鈴木 義典 宮城県立こども病院 (小児アレルギーエディタール)
子どもの成長発達と子育て支援 における育児相談のポイント	● 講師 相澤 直生 岩手県立大学 (小児看護専門看護師)
事故やけがの理解と応急処置 小児の救急処置法	● 講師 佐山 孝子 東北大学病院 (日本ACILE協会FALDアドバイザー)
小児の感染症と予防接種	● 講師 齊武 夫氏
子どもの生活リズムの大切さ	● 講師 さかい たけお 赤ちやんこどもクリニック院長
	● 講師 藤野 光子 岩手県立大学

Trainings were designed to “increase the knowledge and skills of nurses as professionals working with children” and doctors or nurses specializing in pediatrics were invited as lecturers. Participants learned about ways of dealing with diseases that are often seen in childcare facilities, such as “food allergies” and “infectious diseases and vaccinations”, as well as knowledge and techniques for encouraging the healthy growth and development of children. This includes topics such as the growth and development of children, providing child-rearing support, and the importance of children having routines. Participants talked about the importance of learning with responses such as “I realized that I need to acquire more knowledge so that I can interact with children, rather than avoiding them because it seems difficult” and “I think that everyone who works in childcare should study this.” There were also comments about the difficulties of working as the only nurse in a childcare center such as a comment from one respondent who said “It’s difficult for nurses to speak up in kindergartens”. One of the participants, a current nursery school nurse, joined the organizing committee.

(2) 2015 to 2016

2015年～2016年	
研修会の目的 ネットワークの構築 ⇒交流会	
実践につながる研修会 ⇒実践報告(メインテーマに沿ったそれぞれの活動報告)	
障がいのある子どもと家族の看護	● 講師 荒木 晴子 北里ハビタリテーションセンター(看護局長)
障がいのある子どもの受け入れ 支援の実例	● 講師 相澤 直生 (小児看護専門看護師)
保育園における保健指導・感染症対策	● 講師 藤井 裕子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
保育園における保健指導・感染症対策を実施するにあたって	● 講師 荒木 晴子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
療育の大切さと子どもおよび保護者への保健指導の実例	● 講師 藤田 美生氏 岩手県立こども病院

Once the trainings got underway, meetups to “build a network of childcare center nurses in Iwate Prefecture” were begun. From the second meetup, the format of the meetups was changed to a case study discussion in line with the goal of the meetups being beneficial for professional practitioners. With this intended purpose in mind, participants were asked to talk about their own experience in regards to the session’s main theme in a field report in order to help other participants apply the lesson content from the training in their own practice. In order to ensure the training remained participant-centered, time was also allocated for participants to discuss and share what they had learned at other trainings. Participants commented that “It was good to learn about what things are like at other kindergartens” and “I now know what I actually need to do when I go back to my nursery school”. One of the participants, a nursery school nurse, joined the organizing committee.



(3) 2016 to 2019

2016年～2018年	
研修会の目的 事例検討や演習(メインテーマに沿った今後の活動)	
乳幼児期の発達メディアとのつきあひ方	● 講師 田澤 博氏 仙台医療センター
こどもの理解と認識	● 講師 松田 大樹氏 宮城県立こども病院(副院長)
お口と身体とこころの発達 (生活の中で大切な事)	● 講師 岩瀬 寛士 松前博典氏 イーヘルプがらひん
乳幼児期に多いアレルギー性皮膚炎 皮膚炎の理解と緊急時の対応を学ぶ	● 講師 北宮 博氏 東北薬科薬科大学
緊急時対応における看護師の役割と職員間の連携	● 講師 志木 由美江氏 前全国保育園保健師看護協議会会長

2019年	
研修会の目的 事例検討や演習(メインテーマに沿った今後の活動)	
小児期に多い疾患 こんなの症状が見られたら！?	● 講師 鈴木 力生氏 けいこどもクリニック院長
子どもの虐待について～保育園看護師としてできること～	● 講師 荒木 晴子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
	● 講師 藤井 裕子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
	● 講師 藤田 美生氏 岩手県立こども病院

The meetups and case study reports meetings were replaced with group work (“GW”) sessions to ensure participants can engage more actively with the training. In these GW sessions, participants created manuals to use in childcare facilities based on the theme of that session in order to apply the knowledge they had gained in the training lectures, while socializing. Group work sessions were set up drawing on the experience of the nurses so that childcare center nurses with less experience could absorb knowledge and skills, in addition to socializing with other childcare center nurses. Participants said, “Creating a manual (in the GW) has helped me feel that I can do this on my own” and “I learned about multiple ways to tackle the problems that I’ve been having.” Two of the participants, current nursery school nurses, joined the organizing committee.



(4) 2022 to now

2022年～2023年	
研修会の目的 事例検討や演習(メインテーマに沿った今後の活動)	
新型コロナウイルス感染症～保育園での対応について語り合う～	● 講師 末永 亮氏 前全国保育園保健師看護協議会会長
保育園の看護師が虐待を見抜くには？子どもの虐待	● 講師 藤井 裕子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
保育園の看護師が虐待を見抜くには？保健師の視点から	● 講師 藤井 裕子氏 北宮保育園保健師看護協議会 副会長
お口から発達を考える～食べから話すにつなげる～	● 講師 岩瀬 寛士氏 松前博典氏 一般社団法人アクトビティわて アクティブキッズ

Trainings that had been interrupted by COVID-19 were restarted due to requests from current nurses at childcare centers. With each participant implementing COVID-19 prevention measures, training was restarted in a shortened format with only a GW session on the theme of “infection prevention measures.” Participants commented, “I wish we could have met sooner and exchanged information,” “Listening to what other facilities are doing is very helpful,” and “I’m glad we’ve been able to gather at all.”

Since 2023, trainings have been hosted at the pre-COVID schedule of twice a year. As members retired from the organizing committee as they left their positions as nurses in childcare centers and new members joined, the organizing committee is currently run by eight people: six current nursery school nurses and two university teachers.

3. Future activities

Though training has led to a certain level of progress in the objectives of “increasing the knowledge and skills of nurses as professionals working with children” and “building a network of nurses in childcare facilities in Iwate Prefecture,” this initiative has not contributed significantly to increasing the expertise of nurses in childcare centers at Iwate Prefecture due to the high rate of turnover of participants and people leaving their job. However, this initiative can be expected to be continued as participants are actively engaging with the training, and nurses who work in childcare centers are taking the lead in planning and running the trainings.

The comment, “I’m glad we’ve been able to gather all,” in the first session back from the interruption of trainings due to COVID-19 makes clear that nurses were anxiously waiting for the opportunity to exchange information with other nursing professionals and felt comforted just by seeing each other’s faces. The COVID-19 pandemic was an especially challenging time for childcare center nurses as there was no evidence-backed public health measures at first, and nurses were asked to make decisions as professionals despite being the only nurses in their workplace. These training sessions, where people could share information with others in the same profession, was not only just an opportunity to gain knowledge and information, but also an important place to check on how their approach compared to others, and build a sense of security and confidence. Taking into consideration that these trainings are not only a place to obtain new knowledge, but also to learn what others in the same profession are doing, we will continue to plan and organize workshops that will benefit participants even more in the future.

