

## Unique Perspective of a Critical Care Nurse

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**Rajni Pal\***

*Department of Nursing Critical Care, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India*

**\*Corresponding Author:** Rajni Pal, Department of Nursing Critical Care, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.

### Abstract

Quality assured patient care is expected by nurses all over the world. Caring has been acknowledged as the inner and essence of nursing. For a critical care nurse, caring for a patient implies saving life. While working in an intensive care unit, learning about various life saving procedures such as Cardio pulmonary resuscitation, endotracheal intubation. inserting a central venous catheter is a wonderful experience. Postings in different intensive care units gives worthwhile experiences in different specialties. However, when providing reassurance to patient about their wellbeing, they taught us how to fight with life. Apart from providing care to the patients, critical care nurse acts as a communicator, a liasor between patient, relatives and health care team. The demand of critical care nurses is in increasing trend all over the world. One should not think twice before choosing critical care as a speciality. From creating a spark of hope in patient's eyes to provide them care at the end of life, critical care nurses acts as a sole support for the patients and family.

**Keywords:** critical care nurse; perspective of critical care nurse

### *Unique Perspective of a Critical Care Nurse*

During the struggle of making it to an Institute of National importance for my post-graduation in nursing profession, getting in a post graduate program was my sole dream. Choosing Critical care as a speciality was not a difficult task for me, as postings in critical care units and emergency during my under graduation, always snatched my interest.

#### *"The experience"*

"M.sc nursing critical care" ohh, the head of the department spoked in a sarcastic manner when she asked who are you? Standing in middle of an ICU, wearing full white apron, hair tied nicely, and sparkle in my eyes as it was my first day of my master's programme in intensive care when everyone including the nurses, residents, other staffs running around for things needed for one patient, I was standing with both my hands folded back and watching them all over. The HOD didn't liked as I was not helping them in the care, and suddenly noticed and asked who are you and I replied M.sc nursing critical care ma'am. She said this is not how you will learn things in ICU, you need to involve with your

soul with patient and you need to go to patient's bedside then only you will learn.

Caring has been acknowledged as the inner core and essence of nursing [1]. For existence of the profession as a scientific discipline caring is the main reason [2]. We used to care for the patients, take the case for presentations and presenting in the ICU's to our juniors. Caring in a critical care environment is different from caring in other nursing environment [3].

The World Federation of Critical Care Nurse defines a critical care nurse as: 'A registered practitioner who enhances the delivery of comprehensive patient centred care, for acutely ill patients who require complex interventions in a highly technical environment, bringing the patient care team a unique combination of knowledge and skills. The role of critical care nurses is essential to the multi-disciplinary team who are needed to provide their expertise when caring for patients and their relatives [4].

When I started learning about the ventilators, syringe pumps, infusion pumps, arterial lines, defibrillators, it gives an immense pleasure to learn about the things that saves lives in intensive care unit. When you work in a critical care setting, you are the only Boss! The feeling of giving care to patients, giving CPR and revived them back to life can't be expressed in words.

### ***Different Eras of Posting***

As a part of this program, we used to get postings in different areas such as neonatal intensive care unit, paediatrics intensive care unit, cardiac and vascular intensive, surgical intensive care units.

Postings in neonatal intensive unit, made me experience feelings of anxiety and joy together at the same time, caring of a new born is such a beautiful feeling. Though, it's important to be vigilant in all critical units but in case of new borns, we need to be extra vigilant and careful. As new-borns, are unable to express their feelings and pain which they were experiencing, by working as a nurse you somehow know what is it that causing them discomfort. Though there is no scientific explanation behind it, it is just like magic that you know what it is that might be causing discomfort to child and this magic will come to you as you gain experience and work with dedication.

During my night duty, around 3:00 am in cardiac intensive unit, an old age patient around 65 years old had undergone valve replacement surgery, on post-operative day five, suddenly started doing spirometry, as he got awake in between sleep. I asked him to sleep well during night, and do this exercise in day time and with a hope in his eyes he said "Nurses asked me to do spirometry every hour, so that I can go home early as it will help in my recovery". I felt so amazed about his dedication towards his recovery. I learned sincerity, dedication from many of my patients.

### ***"A Life Saving Nurse"***

While coming back from a friend's birthday in a taxi, around 11:00p.m, some people were gathered in a small group in between our way, as soon as I reached there, a person lying unresponsive, as I checked for his carotid pulse, and soon realised that the patient had cardiac arrest and suddenly started giving CPR, meanwhile asked my friend to call ambulance. With god's grace ambulance came early and we shifted him to hospital and patient revived. Well, it is our duty as "a lifesaving nurse".

### ***End of Life Care***

It's the truth of the medical profession, we had to see death one or the other day. However, other than any clinician, ICU Nurses are more frequently involved in end of life care with the patient's and their family members. In a U.S nationwide survey, in the process of limiting life support for their patients, nurses experience much emotional difficulty [5].

### ***'Uncountable Blessings'***

A lot of tremendous experiences, I had with patients during my postings. Once an old patient wants to take a walk in ICU, as we asked him to ambulate as much as possible that will help him in his recovery. I was walking with him holding his hands, so that he won't fall, but he said " I will try to walk alone and thanks for your help. When he told like that, I can see a way of independency in his eyes, an

attitude which we want to see in every patient. We felt so happy when patients show such type of independent behavior. They give their blessings to us, when they get discharged. I heard when you truly and sincerely care for your patients and save their life, angels will take care of you and your loved ones in many other ways. And those blessings will come to you in other forms and I felt that many times.

### ***“Choose It or Lose It”***

During our clinical postings in some wards and ICU's I felt that it is much more interesting to work in ICU. I heard that “Nursing touch can do wonders for the patient “and witnessed it many times. Though it is not easy to be a critical care nurse, but trust me it will be worth it. I think one should not think twice before opting critical care as a specialty in nursing. By choosing critical care as a speciality, holds a great responsibility. From witnessing birth of a beautiful soul and various deaths, I somehow learn life lessons that will be remembered for whole of my life. From creating a spark of hope in patient's life, and taking their unending blessings I felt *“Hope is all that is needed in this world”*.

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