

Role of Nurse in Public Health According to Indonesian Law

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Abstract--- *The Law No.38 Year 2014 regarding Nurse (the Nursing Law) provides the possibility for nurses to have their own private practice. Based on Article 30 the Nursing Law, nurses may also provide nursing care in public health. The aim of this research is to define and elaborate the role of nurses in public health conducted in their own private practice according to the nursing law and other related laws applicable in Indonesia. Data used in this research were secondary data, obtained through internet search using google machine. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis to reduce only to relevant data. The relevant data were then analyzed using qualitative method with normative and comparative approach. Result shows that based on understand Law No.36 Year 2009 regarding Health (the Health Law) and Law No.36 Year 2014 regarding Healthcare Givers (the Healthcare Givers Law), each health profession has its own competencies. Therefore, nurses in providing nursing care in public health, nurses are required to obtain public health competencies, besides all the requirements that must be complied in accordance with the Nursing Law. In practice, nurses can play many roles in public health care, in conditions that she/ he shall not conducts activities in public health which do not belong to their competencies. According to Indonesian laws, the role of nurses in public health are somehow limited because of the competencies' issues.*

Keywords--- *Private practice nurses, public health, community nurses*

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, nurses in Indonesia are well protected by the issuance and effectiveness of Law No.38 Year 2014 regarding Nurse (the Nursing Law) [1]. The Nursing Law regulates the rights and obligations of nurses while conducting nursing care. The law also regulates several kinds of nurses based on their competencies. In general there are vocational nurses and professional nurses as practicing nurses, subject to fulfilment of practicing requirements under the law. Those who only graduate from diploma school of nurse can practice as vocational nurses. Professional nurses are those who have passed a professional exam. In-between there are nurses that cannot practice, but they may conduct teaching.

According to the Law, nursing practice can be conducted in a healthcare facility as well as at their own private facilities. During nursing practice, nurses shall provide nursing care, act as counsellor for client, manage nursing care, conduct nursing research, act based on delegation; and/or implementer/executor under circumstances of certain limitations. In the field of nursing care, nurses can either do it within individual health efforts or public health efforts. In public health efforts, nurses can: conduct public health nursing research at family or community level; determine public health nursing

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problems; assist case finding; plan public health nursing action; conduct public health nursing action; conduct case referral; evaluate public health nursing conducted act; conduct community empowerment; conduct advocacy in public healthcare; establish partnership in public health nursing care; conduct health education and counselling; prepare case management; and conduct complementary and alternative nursing management [1].

The above statements in the Nursing Law have provided many kinds, tasks and duties that can be performed by nurses in the field of public health efforts. Even though there were many nurses practicing in public health sector, up to when the research was conducted, the authors have not found previous research that aimed to discuss the competencies of nurses who work in the public health sector based on prevailing laws and regulations in Indonesia. This research aims to determine and elaborate the role of nurse in public health and how it should be implemented in their own private practice according to the Nursing Law and other related laws applicable in Indonesia.

AI. METHODS

- Data

Data used in this research are of secondary data, which are available for public use. The secondary data will include primary legal sources, secondary legal sources, and other sources available for use. Primary legal sources will consist of Indonesian laws and legislations and other kinds of regulations issued by relevant authorities. Secondary legal sources consist of all writings from legal scholar which explained primary legal sources. Other data may include any other data which are not part of legal documents. These data shall consist of books, articles in journals and other kinds of media, including unpublished researches and papers related to explaining the role of nurses in public health.

Data were obtained through internet search using Google Cloud Machine Learning Engine and were then analyzed using content analysis. The purpose of the analysis is to reduce the collected data to just the relevant and sufficient data required to explain and answer the aim of this research. Such data were further analyzed qualitatively by using normative and comparative approach.

- Method of Analysis

Normative approach was conducted because part of the analysis was related to the implementation of applicable laws enforced in Indonesia. Comparative approach was used to explain the implementation of meaning and role of community nurses in several jurisdictions, and further for its implementation in Indonesia based on Indonesian laws and regulations, which are different from other jurisdictions. Qualitative analysis was used since the research relied not on the quantity of the data, but more to the depth of the knowledge and understanding of the researcher of the relevant data, including laws and regulations. During the analysis, the relevant and sufficient data from different jurisdictions were read in detail, and compared one with each other in order to find the core concept and meaning. The results were then used to explain the implementation in Indonesia. Data triangulation was also conducted during the analysis in order to obtain valid and reliable results of the research. Data triangulation was conducted by means of content analysis.

BI. RESULT

- Understanding Public Health Nursing

Public health is not necessarily identical with community health, even though in Bahasa Indonesia both may, in many publications, be translated as “*kesehatan masyarakat*”. Not only in Indonesia, in one publication in India, with the title “Role of nursing in community health”, it discussed about the role of nurse in public health [2]. According to the American Public Health Association [3]:

“public health nursing is a specialty practice within nursing and public health. It focuses on improving population health by emphasizing prevention and attending to multiple determinants of health. Often used interchangeably with community health nursing, this nursing practice includes advocacy, policy development, and planning, which addresses issues of social justice.”

In the United States, public health nurses need credentialing and certification [4]. The Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics states “Public Health Nursing Competencies are the integrated knowledge, skills, judgement and attributes required of a public health nurse to practice safely and ethically. Attributes include, but are not limited to attitudes, values and beliefs” [5]. Mengistu and Misganaw define community health nursing as [6]:

“the synthesis of nursing and public health practice applied to promoting and protecting the health of population. It is a specialized field of nursing that focuses on the health needs of communities, aggregates, and in particular vulnerable populations.”

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) [7] does not differentiate between public health nursing and community health nursing. However, Community Health Nursing (CHN) Standards define the scope of practice or expectations for acceptable nursing practice while the Public Health Nursing (PHN) Discipline Specific Competencies define the essential skills, knowledge and abilities necessary for the practice of public health nursing. CHN Standards and PHN Competencies [8] were mapped to connect both. The World Health Organization (WHO) has the same perspective as CPHA [9]. Meanwhile there are several publications that differentiate between public health nursing and community health nursing [10] [11]. According to Missouri Council for Public Health Nursing, there are ten essential services of public health nursing [12].

- Indonesian Laws and Regulations on Public Health

Indonesian laws and regulations on public health can be found in Law No.36 Year 2009 regarding Health (the Health Law) [13] and Law No.36 Year 2014 regarding Healthcare Givers (the Healthcare Givers Law) [14]. Based on the Health Law, there are two kinds of health efforts: individual health effort and public health effort. Based on those two kinds of efforts, there are also two kinds of healthcare facilities: individual healthcare facilities and public health facilities. Individual healthcare facilities are focused on curative and rehabilitative activities, whereby sick/ ill persons are treated and given intervention in order to make them healthy again. Meanwhile in public healthcare facilities, besides curative there are also promotive and preventive actions. Promotive and preventive actions keep healthy persons in healthy conditions. This means that public health facilities should maintain and increase health and prevent sickness within a group of people or in the community.

In line with Health Law, based on their expertise, healthcare givers can be categorized into, among others, medical profession, pharmacist, nurse and public health profession. A similar categorization can be found also in the Healthcare Givers Law, which also categorizes healthcare givers into, among others, medical profession, nurse, midwife, pharmacist and public health profession. Based on Health Law, every manager in public healthcare facilities should have competencies in public health management as required, Healthcare Givers Law states that each healthcare giver professional should pass its competency test. By passing the competency test, the healthcare givers shall be permitted, subject to the fulfilment of other requirements, to provide their expertise in their fields. This means that, to be able to practice and conduct activities in public health, they shall pass public health competency test and obtain certificate of competency as a public health professional.

IV. DISCUSSION

From the finding above, it can be said, even though there was no consensus on the usage on community health nurse and public health nurse, both of them at least referred to the role and function of nurses in providing nursing care outside certain healthcare facilities. The American Public Health Association states that the term public health nursing is used interchangeably with community health nursing. In Canada, there was an effort to map the Canadian Healthcare Nursing Standards with Public Health Nursing Competencies. The implementation of the standard must be conducted by those who have the competencies.

Under Nursing Law, nursing care can be conducted outside healthcare facilities. This means that nurses do not work for and or under instruction of healthcare facilities. This kind of practice is known as private practice. Private practice allows nurses to conduct individual healthcare services as usually conducted in healthcare facilities by giving nursing care for clients, and public healthcare services. To be able to conduct private practice, nurses must pass the competency examination. This required competency, role and conduct of private nursing practice are further regulated in the Guidance of Private Nursing Practice issued by the Indonesian National Nurses Association (PPNI) [15]. By doing private practice, nurses can provide nursing care directly to individuals, family even community based on their competencies. However, as stated before, the Nursing Law also allows nurses to conduct several activities which are related to public health, even if only from the perspective of nursing care. The roles of nurses in public health efforts based on Nursing Law are similar to those determined by the Missouri Council for Public Health Nursing.

From the view of public health laws and regulations, public health is another profession in healthcare services and activities, which is different from nurse. Public health professions have their own competencies and examinations which are different from nurses. Public health professions themselves consist of more than one profession, with each profession having their own competency, which may be different from the others. In view of this, there is concern that the private practice of community nurses does not necessarily means that the community nurses have the competency to provide public health efforts as defined in the Health Law. This means that, for nurses in order to be able to fully conduct public health activities, they should also pass a public health profession competency test and obtain a public health profession certificate. In practice, the authors have found and met many vocational nurses who follow public health education and have passed the competency exam. This affords two kinds of health profession competencies, vocational nurses and public health professions licenses. The content of the Nursing Law means that nurses can conduct public health efforts but it must be read that it is subject to the fulfillment of public health profession competencies.

V. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that, for nurses to be able to provide public health efforts, as well as having to obtain certificate of competency as private nurses, they should also obtain certificate of competencies in the relevant field of public health. The role of nurses in public health may be limited because of competencies matters. The authors recommend that anybody can have more than one healthcare profession, such as nurses and public health at the same time, subject to their ability to pass the competencies examination.

CONFLIC OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest has been declared.

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