Evolving Nursing Specialty in Clinical Research Practice: Perspectives from Pediatric Clinical Research Field

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Clinical research is indispensable for the development of new medicinal product and advancing medical knowledge to treat diseases and care patients. Nurses (both staff nurses and clinical research nurses) also have played a great role in the field of clinical research over several decades. Treatment of cancer in child and adolescent have been advanced, but cancer is still the leading cause of disease-related death in the age group. As the need for clinical trials in pediatric population is increasing to provide adequately evaluated medicinal products, the role of nurses involved caring research participants has become important.

However, defining and documenting the role of nurses in clinical research was a challenge, and there has been no standardization of scope of practice and specialty identification. Developing the roles of staff nurses in supporting research participants has been tried for many years, but nursing staff have faced many challenges developed negative perspective to clinical research.

Increased complexity and diversity of clinical trial design, new novel cancer therapies and innovated approaches to cancer treatment, and the evolution toward patient-centered medicine and patient-oriented research are new contributing factors which have impact on nursing practice in research setting as well as clinical setting. Future consideration for developing nursing role in clinical research field and supporting nurses is highly required.