



Research Article

Development of a Standardized Job Description for Healthcare Managers of Metabolic Syndrome Management Programs in Korean Community Health Centers



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SUMMARY

Purpose: This study aimed to develop a job description for healthcare managers of metabolic syndrome management programs using task analysis.

Methods: Exploratory research was performed by using the Developing a Curriculum method, the Intervention Wheel model, and focus group discussions. Subsequently, we conducted a survey of 215 healthcare workers from 25 community health centers to verify that the job description we created was accurate.

Results: We defined the role of healthcare managers. Next, we elucidated the tasks of healthcare managers and performed needs analysis to examine the frequency, importance, and difficulty of each of their duties. Finally, we verified that our job description was accurate. Based on the 8 duties, 30 tasks, and 44 task elements assigned to healthcare managers, we found that the healthcare managers functioned both as team coordinators responsible for providing multidisciplinary health services and nurse specialists providing health promotion services. In terms of importance and difficulty of tasks performed by the healthcare managers, which were measured using a determinant coefficient, the highest-ranked task was planning social marketing (15.4), while the lowest-ranked task was managing human resources (9.9).

Conclusion: A job description for healthcare managers may provide basic data essential for the development of a job training program for healthcare managers working in community health promotion programs.

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Introduction

Metabolic syndrome, also known as Syndrome X, became a matter of concern in the United States in the 1980s (Reaven, 1988). The National Education Cholesterol Program—Third Adult Treatment Panel guidelines suggest metabolic syndrome be diagnosed when a person has three or more of the five risk factors: (a) hypertension, (b) glucose intolerance, (c) abdominal obesity, and

dyslipidemia, including (d) elevated triglycerides or (e) decreased high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (National Institute of Health, 2001).

In the United States, one out of every four adults and more than 40% of individuals over the age of 60 have metabolic syndrome (Ford, 2004). The prevalence rate of metabolic syndrome in adults over the age of 30 in South Korea is 28.8%; 31.9% of men and 25.6% of women meet the diagnostic criteria, and its prevalence increases each year (Ministry for Health and Welfare, 2012). Metabolic syndrome is a serious public health issue worldwide (Zimmet, Magliano, Matsuzawa, Alberti, & Shaw, 2005). As so many people now suffer from metabolic syndrome, and it may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes (Eckel, Barouch, & Ershow,

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2002; Gami et al., 2007; Isomaa et al., 2001), controlling this syndrome is a major goal in public health (Kim et al., 2011) and an important task for the community health nurse (Chu-Ru, 2012).

In South Korea, metabolic syndrome management was initiated in 2009 (Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2009). As of 2012, it was provided at 25 community health centers (CHCs) in Seoul. The basic principles of metabolic syndrome management involve synthesizing typical CHC health promotion activities—such as smoking cessation, exercise, sobriety, and nutrition—using an integrated, multidisciplinary approach. These programs must coordinate doctors, nurses, dietitians, exercise specialists, and laboratory technicians. This synthesis is expected to lead to more effective provision of client-centered disease prevention and health promotion services (Kim et al., 2011). The position of healthcare manager was developed at CHCs to ensure successful collaboration within these multidisciplinary, client-tailored teams. Healthcare managers have a number of duties, including providing information on metabolic syndrome and its management, creating individual healthcare plans, performing health status assessments, and providing follow-up plans (Seoul Metropolitan Government). Currently, there are a total of 50 healthcare managers for CHC metabolic syndrome programs in Seoul, and 49 (98.0%) of them are nurses. To provide effective care, healthcare managers require expertise in the varied roles they are required to play. Unfortunately, both in South Korea and abroad, there has often been uncertainty regarding the exact functions of healthcare managers, and without this knowledge it is difficult to provide appropriate training, support, and job assessment.

To ensure that healthcare managers have a clear and effective role in healthcare services, analysis of the tasks that they perform is necessary. Developing a Curriculum (DACUM) is a method of job or occupational analysis that involves a 2-day workshop in which a trained DACUM facilitator and a committee of 5–12 experts create a detailed, graphic depiction of the duties and tasks performed by workers (Norton & Moser, 2008). It is a systematic, evidence-based approach to developing competency-based training (DeOnna, 2002). Through the DACUM process, one is able to build a solid foundation for training program development (Norton, 2009).

We also applied the Intervention Wheel (Clark, 2008), a theoretical model related to community nursing practices, to complement the DACUM analysis. In addition, we conducted focus group discussions to investigate the opinions of both healthcare managers and the team members who collaborate with them on managerial duties and challenges. Finally, we analyzed the importance and difficulty of the tasks we had identified by surveying healthcare managers and other professionals. We expect this study to provide data that will help society better utilize nursing professionals in public agency-centered health promotion programs.

Objectives

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the role of healthcare manager, the principal human resource of metabolic syndrome management programs, allowing us to generate a comprehensive job description. We also evaluated the frequency, importance, and difficulty of each duty in the job description.

Methods

Study design

We conducted a descriptive study of the tasks of healthcare managers responsible for metabolic syndrome management programs in CHCs by employing the DACUM method, using the Intervention Wheel model to classify our results, and holding focus

group discussions. In addition, we evaluated the frequency, importance, and difficulty of each of the tasks identified, finally validating our job description by asking relevant healthcare professionals to rate the relevance of the task list provided.

Setting and sample

Exploratory research was performed in 25 CHCs in Seoul, South Korea. Purposive sampling was conducted. The four research council members included a professor of nursing management, a professor of community nursing, and two nursing PhD candidates. In our focus group discussions, Group 1 included four metabolic syndrome team managers. Group 2 consisted of team members of managers, including one nurse, two dietitians, one exercise specialist, and a laboratory technician. We also conducted a survey on 215 healthcare workers from 25 CHCs, including 46 healthcare managers, 16 CHC directors, 23 metabolic syndrome management team managers, and 130 multidisciplinary team members, to verify that the job description created was accurate.

Ethical consideration

The study protocol and procedures were approved by the ethics committee of the institutional review board of Korea University (No. 12-11-A-2). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Data collection

Data were collected between April 2012 and July 2012, and a flowchart depicting the steps employed in our research is shown in Figure 1.

Phase I: Task analysis

Task analysis was conducted at a DACUM workshop held on April 12th and 13th, 2012. To form a DACUM committee, we assembled healthcare managers who had been employed by a CHC for over 1 year. After outlining the purpose and procedures of this study, we asked the healthcare managers to participate in the DACUM committee as panel members. The resultant panel was composed of 11 members: 9 healthcare managers, a professor of nursing management, and a professor of community nursing. For the task analysis, we conducted a workshop that included all members of the DACUM committee. The workshop was facilitated by the nursing management professor, who was also the task analysis specialist on the committee. After a task analysis orientation, the attendees of the workshop agreed on a definition for metabolic syndrome healthcare manager and on the roles of the position. Next, a list of specific tasks that metabolic syndrome healthcare managers in CHCs in South Korea should perform was prepared and analyzed through group discussion.

Phase II: Adopting the Intervention Wheel model to create a preliminary job description

The Intervention Wheel model was used to create a preliminary job description. This component of the study was also conducted during the DACUM workshop, and involved a literature review based on the task analysis performed. The Intervention Wheel was chosen as the appropriate theoretical model for this study because (a) metabolic syndrome management falls under the rubric of population-based health promotion services and (b) healthcare managers in these programs perform the duties of community nurses. The Wheel encompasses the 16 practices of

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