NRTH 101: Diffusion of Innovation Theory

OVERVIEW

This 1 module (3 CE credit) course introduces nurses to the Diffusion of Innovation Theory which is often regarded as a valuable change model for guiding technological innovation where the innovation itself is modified and presented in ways that meet the needs across all levels of adopters. It also stresses the importance of communication and peer networking within the adoption process.

In simple terms, the diffusion of innovation refers to the process that occurs as people adopt a new idea, product, practice, philosophy, and so on.

OBJECTIVES - Learners will:

- Identify the category characteristics of innovation adopters in the Diffusion of Innovation theory as applied by Rogers.
- Recognize the suitability and application of the Diffusion of Innovation theory in the field of nursing informatics specialization.
- Describe the process and factors that ensure successful evolution along the S curve to the point of saturation.
- Transpose the Diffusion of Innovation theory to their own development within the field of nursing informatics.

Credits: 3 CE hours
Length: 1 module
Tuition: $20 USD
NRTH 101 MODULE

Module 1: Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Diffusion of Innovation

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory was first discussed historically in 1903 by the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde who plotted the original S-shaped diffusion curve, followed by Ryan and Gross (1943) who introduced the adopter categories that were later used in the current theory popularized by Everett Rogers. Katz (1957) is also credited for first introducing the notion of opinion leaders, opinion followers and how the media interacts to influence these two groups. The Diffusion of Innovation theory is often regarded as a valuable change model for guiding technological innovation where the innovation itself is modified and presented in ways that meet the needs across all levels of adopters. It also stresses the importance of communication and peer networking within the adoption process.

The Adoption Stages

In simple terms, the diffusion of innovation refers to the process that occurs as people adopt a new idea, product, practice, philosophy, and so on. Rogers mapped out this process, stressing that in most cases, an initial few are open to the new idea and adopt its use. As these early innovators 'spread the word' more and more people become open to it which leads to the development of a critical mass. Over time, the innovative idea or product becomes diffused amongst the population until a saturation point is achieved. Rogers distinguished five categories of adopters of an innovation: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Sometimes, a sixth group is added: non-adopters.

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