

Time to Move Towards a Private Nurse Practitioner

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IN India, a Private Nurse Practitioner is quite unheard of. Even the idea seems to be an odd one. There can be a 'Practising Medical Man'. But a 'Practising Nurse' is a highly controversial issue, not only in the health community. Curiously enough the Nursing community too opines doubtful views about the scope and prospects of independent Nursing Practices.

For the major part of the bygone years Nurses' work remained walled in hospitals. Nursing Services did not have any place outside the Medical Care centres. Nursing Care was synonymous with patient care in hospitals. Community Nursing is a relatively new idea which has been incorporated in the Nursing curriculum rather recently. But the role of the Community Nurse has not been spelled out accurately.

Community Nursing adopted only two-way services — maternity care is one (again, the larger part of which has been taken over by the more trusted untrained Dais). Secondly, Community Nursing directed its efforts towards educating people about healthful living. But with the breeding of a new group of health workers—the Health Educators—the need has surfaced to channelise the course of Community Nursing towards newer directions.

Interdependent Relationship

The relationship between a health practitioner and the society must be interdependent. A practitioner on her part, has the obligation to offer the best of services in accordance with the health needs. The society, on its part, has the obligation to provide authority and privileges to the practitioners to enable them to discharge their services in a

most satisfying manner. Surprisingly, between the Nursing community and the people there exists a gulf built upon unknowing, uncertainty, misconception and disregard about abilities of Nurses as health care providers. Significantly, though, Nursing is more of an interpersonal process than that of therapeutic actions.

An overall Nursing service embraces more of preventive and promotive aspects of health care. By virtue of the nature of Nursing services, Nurses are in an advantageous position to initiate and guide the society to the appropriate and conducive course of healthful practices and healthful living. But, unfortunately, Nurses' endeavours have not yet been able to break through the walls raised between people and Nurses. Nursing services, so far, have failed miserably to attain recognition and popularity.

The health authorities are definitely responsible for pushing the Nursing services in the shadow. The health plans and health schedules for the society do not reflect the necessity and benefits of Nurses' services in health welfare of the society. Since the services of nurses have never been acknowledged whole-heartedly as well as publicly Nursing could not make appearance in the front row of the health disciplines.

Self Introspection

At the same time it must not be denied that Nursing community is also to be blamed for not being able to bridge the gap between the people and the profession. The stigma in them for being a part of the Nursing community is so deep rooted that they keep themselves totally aloof from the non-Nursing neighbourhood or shy away from the social involvements. This feeling of

inadequacy and inferiority complex hold them back from mingling freely around. This also interferes with the exchange and flow of information regarding Nursing services keeping people and society unaware of the Nursing profession.

A massive orientation of scopes and prospects of nursing services to the public is the need of the hour to apprise people of the occult treasures of Nurses' performance as health care providers. An accurate and also detailed projection of multifaceted professional activities will aid in highlighting the value of Nursing service as an indispensable one. Barriers between Nurses and Nursing care consumers in the society can be lowered by a continuous process of interaction with the society which will help winning public confidence. Through various popular media Nursing profession must make constant and serious attempts to present before the people and society, the illustrious and magnificent aspects of Nursing and its services.

Restructuring Nursing

Restructuring the scope of Nursing functioning and reorganising the activities of Nursing will unearth many concealed possibilities to extend and expand areas of Nursing care. Nursing services must be able to manifest result-oriented performance in the alleviation of the health crisis. Distribution network of Nursing services must ensure ready availability of competent professionals throughout the Nursing service areas. Nurses need to stop keeping low profiles and participate freely and confidently in social engagements.

An adequate non-practising allowance, the demand for which has been there for all times, must get an urgent attention. Once the Nurses are

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Tasks and Challenges in Nursing

A Note in Perspective

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NOW we are on the threshold of the 21st Century. To come across the last hundred years, now the time knocks at the doorsteps of our profession to analyse what it has achieved and what it lacks. When the pages of golden history of Nursing are turned the sufferings, hardships and struggles of the pioneers for its utmost upliftment come to the front. Their effort, their modesty, nobility to bring its status as a 'profession' at par with other technical disciplines is really laudable. Now it has been standing on its own feet wearing the glorious crown of victory as the most challengeable and unbeaten profession to the 'Jobseekers'. All the career building students accept this profession as a job-oriented and technically sound advantageous profession like other technical lines and are taking admission in thousands. Above all, everybody is fascinated with its nobility and dedication to render service for the mankind.

Nurses take a key role in the progress of the country's health from the grassroot level to the top. 'Nursing' as a part is very indispensable for Medical Science. As health is vital for human beings so are 'the Nurses' for Medical Science.

Some people bear the idea that 'Nursing' is a mere training, not based on technical background like others. This misconception should be removed by proper propaganda and hiking up our professional education level. The key lies is our compassionate behaviour, dignified personality and intelligence. We are now in a position behind all sciences to answer the society marvellously and intelligently all its queries.

No doubt in the sea of education

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the Nurses have achieved a lot but still it lags behind in some aspects. The scope is very limited for our higher education. Though the ladder of the education is placed with graduation, post-graduation, M.Phil, Ph.D courses like other technicals, the limited seats are incompatible to educate lakhs of Nurses to improve their knowledge and standard. It should be compulsory for all Nurses to go in for higher study.

To reach the pinnacle of success we should have separate Nursing Universities and research units and a separate Directorate of Nursing in each state to solve our problems smoothly. In this regard Resolutions No 4 and No 7 had been passed in the XVII TNAI Biennial Conference in September 1997 at Chennai by our respected members. We should put forth this issue before the Government unitedly and the voice should be raised from every corner of India.

Nursing Research

Though we have crossed many milestones, one seems we are lagging behind in the field of research. We have not achieved any eye-catching success so far in this aspect. So, the pioneers and frontiers of 'Nursing' who are at the top level for planning and decision-making, should chalk out programmes and plans for budget to conduct the research projects. Our respected teachers should take keen interest in this. The graduates and post-graduates will develop their creative minds and they could be posted as Research Associates under different projects. As a result we will lessen our unemployment problem to some extent.

The refresher courses should be conducted periodically on current trends for the clinical and non-clinical Nurses who will give an aid to improve their quality of work. The programmes

should be organised every year in their working place to make the system convenient, economic and time saving. The liaison should be kept with medical companies and enterprises to make the Nurses familiar with their new inventories. This teamwork can be best performed with proper coordination and joint collaboration.

Besides these we should be provided with an identity card and licence, which must be legally protected to render service to the public in the wider spectrum.

At last besides our genuine demands and rights the basic hymn 'Service to Mankind is Service to God' should not be forgotten by us. No doubt when a synthesis of qualities like probity, liberality and being sympathetic with a tender heart for others' feelings are added to the Nurses' personality there remains a special and unique place for 'Nursing' as a 'profession' in the people's heart. The brain with compassionate personalities definitely make a revolution amongst other professions. The people will taste its pleasure in a different thought.

Private Practitioner

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eligible to draw an adequate NPA it will not be difficult for us Nurses to have a modest start of Nursing Practice which will reflect a far-reaching promise for the profession. Since our society is used to judge the merit of any profession by the pay-packets allotted, the first and foremost task before the Nursing profession is to attain equality in pay allocation. This will automatically elevate the position and status of the Nursing profession in the society. Independent nursing practice in the society will then get acceptance and recognition.