

Future of Nursing at a Glance

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NURSING is a giant highway on which Nurse is a traveller. In order to reap the new horizons of the professions, we must become aware of our divine purpose. We must know: who are we? what are we? where are we headed? How many nurses of today remember the fact that we are continuing the work of God—relieving pain, providing comfort and peace, etc.

We are called in this profession to discover and use the creative talents bestowed upon us by our creator for the betterment of ourself and our fellow men. Lord made us creative individuals and He wants us to succeed and not fail. For that, one has to find the levels of one's creative ability and express it.

Florence Nightingale, a Thinker

Why Florence Nightingale was accepted as an eminent person of that time. Is it because she could set out the principles of modern Nursing? Not only that, but could drop the mortality rate of the Crimean War from 42% to 2%. She was a thinker, and a doer rather than a talker.

The Nursing leaders of today speak on comprehensive scientific Nursing care. And how many of them analysed: What it is? And, has Nursing science arrived? Not yet. Why? Because a science can be defined as such only when there is a scientific process and a scientific product. Scientific process is the research method used to investigate a phenomenon concerned with a discipline. And how many Nurses of today are discovering and refining the new and existing knowledge through research?

Nursing to be considered a science requires a body of knowledge that developed from Nursing research. The idea of public health first emerged from our profession. But even now we do not have any research facilities for Public Health Nursing, whereas the medical profession has reached for advances in public health and still we are borrowing the knowledge from them.

The present status of Nursing varies among countries. Because the central concepts of Nursing are the concepts of person, environment, health and Nursing as generalized across all areas of Nursing. This is according to Flaskerud and Halloran. Margaret Newman says that Nursing enhances the relationship between person and environment to achieve the goal of health.

The art of Nursing may change from place to place since the above concepts are broad ones.

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Now most of us are following the foreign procedures. We do not have a separate practice of Nursing apt to our person, culture, climate, etc. For example: We use hot water bag for tepid sponging and how many Nurses of today think whether it is necessary for our hot climate? Why our critical thinking capacity is being lost? Only because we are less oriented on bed-side Nursing.

Comprehensive Scientific Care

We argue that the care we take in delivering is comprehensive scientific Nursing Care. Again, one may question, what it is? Is it handling electronic equipment? Or is it working in ICU? The answer has to be evolved from our research studies. Hammer may define Nursing as helping. Roy may say Nursing is another way of manipulating the environment for health.

And we shall say it is the process of responding to a situation in a reasonable and scientific way.

All the professions have got a specific definition and why does Nursing not have a definition specific that is its own? Because we don't have ideas specific to our discipline. Through a simple example I shall explain what is scientific Nursing care. If you keep a decubitus ulcer from contaminating with face by any method, that is scientific Nursing Care. Now how many of you are delivering such a care? Because of the high Nurse Patient ratio no Nurse can deliver a comprehensive Nursing care. The extreme adverse effect of this situation is that no patient will get complete care. And how many people of the society know this fact?

Another evil spirit of Nursing profession of today is the tendency of delegation of jobs. Do you think Nursing can be delegated?

How many of us are successful in protecting our territory? "Take out your Nursing practice act, read what you are licenced to do and stop referring your clients to other health professionals". The advice comes from a Canadian Nursing leader. According to her if we continue the present practice of delegating the jobs at the end we will be taking care of the room and bed and everyone else will be looking after the patient.

Why Nurses are delegating the delicate jobs? The reasons are many. The main reasons are: the rapid development of other health professions; since we do not have an exact concept about Nursing we will be satisfied by giving medicines and injections that we believe as complete Nursing care. Another reason is that we Nurses are more house-oriented than service-oriented. Our skill, attitude and

knowledge are working at different angles. Nurses of today study a lot of subjects but how many Nursing students study about humanity which is the core part of the art of Nursing. A humanitarian outlook will help to get away depersonalisation from our service. It is high time to include humanities as a subject in the Nursing curriculum, because modern care givers are more equipment-centred than person centred.

What about our bedside Nursing care? And what about our recording and reporting abilities. How many haemiplegic patients are admitted per day, and how many trochanter rolls and how many foot boards we have to use for them. Yes, we have one which may be in the corner of our store. Why this happens? It is because we are very little or not involved in health planning at central level as well as at individual level. Any change in the delivery of health care affects Nursing and because planning will no doubt cause some types of change or modification, Nurses should be actively involved in the planning process.

The involvement of Nurses in health planning should be encouraged and seen as a responsibility of the profession in shaping its own future. For the individual Nurse, involvement in health care planning can be a way to develop skill and knowledge and to develop inter-/intra-disciplinary and consumer network.

In addition to the networking—the opportunity to interact with colleagues, members of other profession and the community. It helps in improving the quality and distribution of health care service.

For effective involvement a Nurse should study and see all the problems and areas where much improvement is needed. For that she may require his/her colleagues' advice before going in for planning. She should know the law, parliamentary procedures, legal aspects of the professional limitation, consumers' needs, etc.

Recently, there was an in-service course as a part of continuing education for head Nurses of my district. It is observed that most of them were not aware of the new advance in Nursing and medical science. For example, all members believed that fruits are always contraindicated for diabetic patients. They did not realize that we are permitted to do I.V. injections. This shows that we are less interested in our journals. But remember that it is our responsibility to change the practice according to the changing laws. We found that continuing education is a best tool to improve the knowledge to orient ourselves about the modern trends in Nursing. There is only one college in the country which is conducting the programme with central financial aid, i.e., R.A.K. College of Nursing, New Delhi. This type of facilities should be provided to all states. To achieve that how many Nurses will shout?

For a better future we need certain changes in Nursing education also. As per request of T.N.A.I. the Karnataka Government could launch a new

board for Nursing education. This step taken by the Karnataka Government were welcomed by all the Nurses of that State. But other states are still under confusion as to whether they will get such Directorate for Nursing Education. The standard of Nursing education can be brought up only by such a Directorate specially for Nursing education.

Why Nurses are losing their status in the society? This is because we have failed to convince the society about our role in promotion, prevention and care and rehabilitation of diseases and patients. For example, how many people know that foot drop is prevented by Nurses alone. When it occurs, they believe it as a consequence of disease pattern. And how many Nurses could convince the society that foot drop is a complication and can be prevented only by Nursing. I am very proud to say about our profession which is so far not contaminated with 'bribe money'. This is a good sign for a better future. I shall stop with two more words: Research, you will find; Demand, you will get.

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