

NURSE AND AIDE : A NURSING ASSISTANT'S POINT OF VIEW

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Yes, at times, the numerous complaints of patients, the never-ending tasks of making beds and administering baths, and the constant emptying of bedpans, among numerous other chores, all seem to pile up to produce the typical, harried nurse and nursing assistant. Yet everything boils down to the certain quality of care given to the patient in a manner which is both effective and efficient. I realize, as a nursing assistant myself, that the cooperation between a nurse and her aide is of utmost importance and any gaps in total teamwork must not occur.

The work load should be divided up according to how much each party should be able to handle in regard to her training. I know that a nurse is knowledgeable and is able to do all of the duties included in my position, in addition to other tasks, such as charting patients' progress and dispensing medications, which only she can undertake and which I am not legally permitted to do. Thus, the aide should try her best to deliver patient care so that her team leader is able to direct her attention to other important matters. If possible, the aide and her nurse should work with each other in various activities such as making beds and bathing patients, for a team always functions better and faster as compared to an individual worker. One person on the team can start patient care or finish where the other left off. All of this cooperation saves so much time and trouble, which is one of the most important concepts in nursing.

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Both nurse and aide should keep in mind that one should not depend too heavily on the other for completing certain chores, or the working relationship will be seriously damaged. The team member will resent having to work with her partner, for she will feel that she is doing all the work, while the other either does not help enough or does not participate at all. The most likely result will be that the uncooperative worker will gain such a reputation among the staff that no one would even desire to work with her.

The registered nurse and nursing assistant should not let their titles alone determine which tasks are demeaning to their positions and which are not. As an example, one day I was totally engrossed in the morning routine for a postoperative patient, when my team leader left a commode in the hallway outside of the room and told me to have it cleaned. There was no reason why she could not have done the job, as she certainly had enough time, and the utility room was already on her way. Conservation of time is what a team should strive for as opposed to the allotment of tasks according to what is proper for each member's title. Titles amount to nothing when a patient's care and life are at stake. A head nurse has just as much duty to assist patients as do the nurses and nursing assistants under her leadership.

Communication between people is the basis of all interactions within a hospital's daily existence. The nurse must make sure that all those under her supervision and working with her, understand exactly what is expected of them, for no room for any mistakes can be allow-

ed in regard to patients' health. Reports must be delivered clearly and concisely with all matters explained thoroughly. The aide must not be afraid and should be encouraged to pose questions, for learning is, after all, an everyday process, even for those who believe they have incorporated all of the knowledge there is to be had.

Individuals should not abstain from voicing their opinions, criticisms, or complaints in regard to each other. How else would people realize what their faults and virtues are? This is especially important in the relationship between a nurse and her aide. The harbouring of feelings may be unhealthy for the partnership, so both parties must make it known what they do and do not expect from each other. Grudges would best be brought out in the open, so immediate steps can be taken to rectify the troubling situation.

The alliance of a nurse and her assistant does not come about quickly or easily, for each must work and learn from each other one step at a time. If each member puts forth a considerable amount of effort on her part, all of these steps will eventually lead to a union in which both persons can function and grow to the utmost of their capabilities.

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brum of the body. It is needless to say that B.M.R. forms the basis of determining the calorie requirements of an individual under different living conditions. In nutritional disorders and other diseases the estimation of B.M.R. is of great value in deciding the type of diet that is to be prescribed to a patient.