

power. At times the cooperation to carry out the responsibility is lacking. In such cases accountability of performance is confused and frustration occurs.

Studies have shown that a nurse who anticipates and makes decisions independently is attracted to community nursing because of the greater autonomy and discretion. In such areas a system of protection

may be perceived as a hindrance. Davis.

The community expectations of high standards of performance can be achieved by united efforts of all health personnel. The nursing association in any country or for that matter is accountable for the standards laid down for the profession. As such, we members of the association, have an important responsibility

and accountability to the community.

- 1) Donovan Helen, M. *Nursing Services Administration Managing the enterprise*, Mosby Co. Saint Louis. 1975, p. 71.
- 2) *Keith Pat. M. and Castle Mary. "Community Health Nurse" *Preferengces for system of Protection*. *Nursin - Research*, July-August, 1976, p. 252.
- 3) Davis, Fred et al. *Problems and issues in Collegiate Nursing Education in the Nursing Profession : Five Sociological Essays*, ed. by Fred Davis. John Willy & Sons. 1976, p. 138-175.

History of Surgery in India—I

Mrs. Saroj Vesuvala, Nursing Superintendent, Hindu Rao Hospital, Delhi.

SUSRUTA, a descendent of the Vedic sage, Vishawamitra, was the greatest Indian surgeon of all times. His work on surgery is known as *Susruta Salya Tantra*. This was composed about the sixth century B.C. It was revised as *Susruta Samhita* by Nagarjuna who lived in the fourth century B.C.

Susruta led a group of holy men to the hermitage of King Divodasa of Benares who was the incarnation of Dhunvantari, the god of healing. Addressing him respectfully they said: "Entrust us that we may learn to heal the illness of those who desire well being and that we may prolong our own lives. On this knowledge rests all in this world and in next; for this we have approached the venerable one as thy pupils". The holy Divodasa answered: "Welcome, my children. We all, without further examination, are worthy to receive the teaching".

Before Susruta's time, the profession of healing in India was practised by Surgeons (Salya Vaidas), Physicians (Bhisakas), Priest-doctors (Bhisgatharvana), Poison-curers (Vishaharas) and Demon-doctors (Kriyaharas).

To practise the art of healing they had to go into the open street calling out for patients. They

stayed in houses surrounded by gardens of medicinal herbs. Surgeons were not considered as respectable as priest-doctors.

Susruta as a Teacher

Susruta practised and taught surgery. He instructed his students to try their knives repeatedly first on certain natural and artificial objects resembling diseased parts of the human body before carrying out the actual operation.

Students practised incision on certain vegetables, dummies and dead animals, aspiration of fluids from abdomen on leather bags filled with water or urinary bladder of dead animals. Sutures and ligatures on hides or cloth, bandaging on dummies.

Dissection

Human bodies for dissection were first covered with grass and kept in the flowing water of a river. The skin, after having been peeled off, muscles, organs and bones were studied. Students were imparted practical knowledge of the various vital or danger spots (Marmas) of the body.

Susruta stressed practical and theoretical training of his pupils as is evidenced by his remarks; "The physician who is learned only in book knowledge (Sastras)

but is unacquainted with practical methods of treatment or the one who knows the practical details of the treatment but from self confidence does not study the book is unfit to practise his calling. Such a person deserves to be killed by the king.

STOP PRESS

Important decisions taken at the TNAI Council and House of Delegates meetings held in September '78 will be published in the next issue of the Journal, but one important decision which needs to be communicated to the members of the Association is about the postponement of the TNAI elections which were to be conducted for the offices of the President and the Treasurer.

The Council decided to postpone the elections of these two offices till the next House of Delegates meeting to be held in April 1979. This decision was taken on the basis of some irregularities found in the observance of election procedure.

The present President, Miss Cherian, was requested by the Council to continue till the election were finalized. Accordingly, the present incumbents of the offices of President and Treasurer will continue till then.

Secretary, TNAI