

Refresher Course in Paediatric Nursing

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To attain the quality of nursing care essential to meet the health requirements of our future citizens, we need nurses who are well prepared in the field of paediatrics.

No doubt, we are confronted with the serious problem of having far too few nurses to take care of the huge number of children who are hospitalized. But the situation demands, that the nurses who are carrying the responsibility now, should be as well prepared as possible.

It is generally agreed, that the basic programme in nursing should prepare a nurse for a first level position i.e., the staff nurses position in paediatric nursing, just as it prepares her for a first level position in other areas of nursing, such as medical, or surgical nursing.

But very frequently the first level positions in paediatric nursing involves prevention of emotional trauma or injury, her responsibilities to the parents, increased knowledge of children's developmental needs and needs of a child for sound personality development. Majority of the graduate nurses of a three year diploma school of nursing have 12 weeks of clinical experience in paediatric nursing. This education is not sufficient to foster a deeper understanding of the child and his illness, nor does it stimulate the development of skills which nurses need in paediatric nursing. There are very few nursing programmes which emphasize the psychological, sociological and developmental factors needed in the comprehensive nursing care of children. Of course there are also University programmes which prepares nurses to perform functions required of a paediatric nurse.

The need for better prepared nurses is apparent in every paediatric unit. In view of the special

skills which the paediatric nurse is called to perform more often than the nurse dealing with adult patients, it would seem that all professional nurses working with children, need the stimulation and educational advantage of a refresher course programme or in-service education programmes.

The initiative to start such a programme in the College of Nursing, Post Graduate Institute, Chandigarh, came from World Health Organization sponsored by Government of India with UNICEF assistance in 1967. Admission is open to all professional nurses sponsored by the Institutions/Hospitals through the Directorate General of Health Services (Nursing Section) New Delhi. This course is conducted twice a year. Each participant is given financial assistance to cover the daily living and travelling expenses.

The main aim of this programme is to provide learning experiences which will enhance the ability of nurses in paediatric nursing.

The main objectives of this programme are :

1. To develop the ability to assess the nursing needs and analyse the resources available in Child Nursing situations in the hospital and community.
2. To develop the ability to plan, organise and evaluate appropriate teaching in the hospital and community.
3. To gain knowledge and understanding of growth and development of children from conception to childhood and use this knowledge in nursing.
4. To increase knowledge of the environmental and social factors in the Indian society which influences Child Growth and Development and to utilise this knowledge in nursing of sick children.

5. To increase knowledge of the significant role that nutrition plays in the promotion of optimum maternal and child health and increase skill in applying this knowledge to nursing.
6. To increase knowledge and skill related to comprehensive nursing and give the highest standard of nursing care to pre and post-natal mothers and sick children.

The activities that are planned to implement these objectives include :

Conferences : Alongwith the supervisor and the ward sister, the participants consider the patients nursing needs and the goals, the work load carried by the people caring for these patients, the responsibilities of the nursing personnel in the unit, the previous experience of the participant, the work schedule of the nursing personnel and records and reports.

Group Work : To help participants understand sick children's behaviour and nursing needs each participant is given an opportunity to lead group discussions.

Social Lectures : These are planned on topics essential for the paediatric nurse. Special emphasis is laid on the growth and development, care and guidance which is essential for sound personality development and preventive paediatrics.

Clinical Conferences : Participants plan, assemble material, prepare and present unique treatment programmes for a particular child, in which nursing has an outstanding function.

Critical Study : Nursing procedures are examined critically by the participants to determine its effectiveness in the care of children. This is done as a part of patient-centered care.

Written Material : Each participant is provided with written material with accurate information.

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