

Indian Nursing Council

ALTHOUGH NURSING COUNCILS have been set up on national level in other countries of the world (e.g. General Nursing Council of the England & Wales.) Indian Nursing Council has only one function i.e. to set up uniform standard of training for nurses, midwives and health visitors and has no responsibility of registration. Registration is carried out by various registration Councils set up at various State levels. In U.S.A., National League of Nursing has been set up to maintain standards of Nursing Education but it is not established under an Act. The Indian Nursing Council has been established under an Act of Parliament which came into being in 1947 and has been amended in 1950 and 1957. Thus the nurses of India have a unique position and that is, if they wish to bring about a uniform standard of nursing education in the country, they could work for it through the Indian Nursing Council which has been established under an Act of Parliament. This also gives the nurses a very major responsibility and that is that if they have to bring about changes through the Indian Nursing Council they have to fully understand the organisation and framework of Indian Nursing Council and how to bring about changes effectively.

Constitution of Indian Nursing Council.

Section 3 (1) of the Indian Nursing Council Act describes the constitution and composition of the council. There are 25 elected members through different registration councils and institutions, 26 Ex-officio members including Superintendent of Nursing Services and Director of Health Services of various States, 4 nominated members of the Government of India and 3 elected members of Parliament, making a total of 55 members. Composition of 55 members are 31 nurses, 19 Doctors and 5 others. Mode of election is described in

section 5 (1) and (2) and in the regulations. The President and Vice-President are elected by the Council. Secretary has been the Nursing Advisor of the Dte. General of Health Services from 1947 till to-date. Section 6 of the Act gives details of term of office and casual vacancies.

Executive Committee consists of 7 elected members of the Council by the Council and President and Vice-President who are ex-officio members. Office of the Council includes the President, Secretary-Treasurer and ministerial staff.

Meetings

Section 7 (1) & (2) describes conduct of council meetings. The Council ordinarily meets once a year. Executive Committee meets as and when required.

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Recognition of qualifications

Qualifications included in Part I of Schedule shall be recognised qualifications and Part II of the Schedule shall be recognised higher qualifications. However, the council has recommended a change in the existing schedule in which the Schedule will indicate only recognised qualifications in India and abroad and will not indicate a part for higher qualification. There is provision for recognising foreign qualification (section 112 (a) and (b)).

Inspection

Executive Committee appoints inspectors whether from members of the Council or otherwise to inspect any institution recognised and to attend examinations held for the purpose of granting recognised qualification or higher qualification. The report of inspections is submitted to the Executive Committee for further action. One post of Inspector has been created in 1970 and efforts are being made to fill the post.

Withdrawal of Recognition

Report of Inspectors if unfavourable, is sent to the State Government, who in turn reports

back after an enquiry. On receipt of such explanation the Council will take such appropriate action as described in section 14 (3) (a) and (b).

All declarations of recognition and withdrawals of recognition (section 10 & 14) are carried out by a resolution of the Council which is published in the official Gazette.

Section 12 of the Act gives the Council the power to require information as to courses of study and examinations by the authority in the States from time to time. This enables the Council the right to know all about training and examinations and qualifications offered by any authority anywhere in the country. Section 16 of the Act provides for power to make regulations. Para (8) of section 16 states "Prescribing the standard curricula for the training of nurses, midwives and health visitors for training courses for teachers of nurses, midwives and health visitors, and for training in nursing administration;" and (h) of the same section states "prescribing the conditions for admission to courses of training as aforesaid" etc. Such provision in the Act may be of interest to the participants of this Conference.

The Act when amended in 1957 provided that the Council shall maintain a register of nurses which shall be deemed a public document and a copy be published in the Gazette of India. For this purpose, each State Council shall supply 20 printed copies of the State Register to the Council in the initial stage followed by sending of yearly list of various categories registered for the purpose of compiling the register.

The Regulations

The regulations include details of meetings of Council with procedure of the meetings and minutes, election and filing of casual vacancies, tenure and duties of office of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and ministerial staff, inspections, finance and account and sale of publications.

The Indian Nursing Council is an autonomous body and its official relationship with the States is through the State Governments.

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