

Nursing as a Career

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"Where there exist the anguished pain of a terminal illness, the profound quiet of a death, the joyful thrill of a new birth, the cold loneliness of the aged, the playground traumas of the school child, the utter rejection of the emotionally disturbed, there is Nursing. Nursing is a human response to another's need."

Traditionally Nursing is known as a means of caring for others by the use of touch. Physical relief of pain and suffering is offered by the nurse as she touches the patient with not only her hands, but also her mind and heart as well. It is the nurse who is frequently present at the moment of crisis in the patients' illness. She has to employ all the technological advances of the twentieth century, plus the individual facet of her personality, with which to alleviate the patients' pain and anxiety.

With the application of the basic sciences, such as physics, chemistry, microbiology, biology, and the behavioural sciences, Nursing in the 1980s finds itself in a position of caring for the acutely and chronically ill and striving for man's optimum health. The nurse not only administers to the ill but she also directs and gives care to those well individuals who cannot assume their own daily self care.

She is vitally concerned with maintaining health, and today's nurse becomes involved in clinical research in Nursing to act in the prevention of disease and its transmission, to innovate better delivery of health care and to add to basic Nursing knowledge. Today's nurse is dedicated not only to alleviation of pain, but also to its ultimate prevention. This health practitioner realizes that, that goal can be met only by her social involvement. The nurse has come to be an active social agent in the ecological prevention of mental and physical illness.

Philosophy of Nursing Practice

The fundamental of Nursing practice is a genuine positive regard for man. From such a basis, the practitioner develops respect for her own personal dignity, which is reflected in her regard and care for another human being. She perceives her patient not as a carrier of disease, but as one person, within a family unit, who is afflicted by physical and emotional pain. She provides for his continuity of care in her direction, of other care workers, and her supervision of their activity. She also teaches her patient and his family about his illness, what he can anticipate, how to care for himself, and indeed to prevent such disorders. These services are rendered

not only in the hospital setting, but in the home, clinics and the community health centres.

Involved in such a total philosophy of Nursing care, the nurse plans her care individually for the patient calling upon resource persons as necessary in meeting the patient's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. She continually re-evaluates his / her progress and alters the plan of care accordingly, just as she continues to evaluate her own professional growth, she reads and attends workshops or enrolls in formal studies to ensure her learning and professional growth.

Types of Nursing Careers

A career is distinguished from a job in that a career proceeds with the course of one's life. As the dedicated person grows educationally and experimentally, parallel advances are made in one's life career. A career is a part of the individual's self-system. So it is with a career in Nursing. The growth of the person parallels the professional advancement of that individual in her Nursing career. The greater the growth of the person of the nurse in her own career, the greater can be her contribution to social needs.

There are two main roads to being a registered nurse: one by a three-year diploma hospital school or by a four year college or University programme. Regardless of her nursing programme the graduate seeks initial employment as a Staff Nurse in a hospital setting to develop more fully her technical skills. If she is a graduate of a baccalaureate programme, she can make more rapid career advancement in terms of position and salary than her counterpart from the other programme. Such advancement does not necessarily imply that she will be away from the patient, but it means greater responsibility in supervision of Nursing staff and direct care of the more seriously ill patients.

Specialization in Nursing occurs at the masters level of education; thus if the nurse desires to specialize in a particular area of Nursing, for example Medical-Surgical Nursing, Obstetrical Nursing, Paediatric Nursing, Psychiatric Nursing, Community Health Nursing or School Health Nursing, she will need a baccalaureate degree in Nursing to undertake graduate study in these professional fields. She then becomes a specialist by earning a master's degree in her chosen area of Nursing.

Expert in an Area of Work

As a specialist in Nursing, she is considered an

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