Modern Trends in Nursing Administration

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Today, the concept of nursing is changing rapidly all over the world. At the same time a new philosophy of Nursing Education is taking grip of nursing profession. Modern nursing was established over a 100 years ago but since World War II, tremendous changes in technology and scientific advances have challenged the nursing profession and its leaders to re-evaluate the outdated concept of nursing education and nursing service to meet the challenge of this space age. Since Independence, Nursing in India has made great progress; yet much more remains to be done to be able to compete with other advanced countries and to give optimum nursing care to both the well and the sick. A well person may be physically well but is ignorant about how to maintain the status of well being, and we are the health educators who aspire lofty ideals without making the society health conscious. Just as charity begins at home, in the same manner practice of health and health education begins with us. Each member of the nursing profession has the duty to herself or himself, first to achieve optimum health and maintain it whereby we become the instrument of care and cure the ills and sickness of the society at large.

To discuss about the modern trend in Nursing Service and Nursing Administration, it is imperative to look back historically and evaluate the changes that took place during the last century.

In India as early as 3000 B.C., the medicine, surgery and care of the patient was of high order. During the reign of King Ashoka i.e. about 226 B.C., many hospitals were built similar to modern hospitals (stated in the history). There were no written evidences of regular nursing courses; however Sushruta had laid down the principles of taking care of the sick. Prior to Christian influence, it could very well be said that early hospitals were established in India as per teachings of Buddha and it had religious cult.

Previous to Christian Era, hospitals were actually temples, dedicated to the care of the sick, which was actually magical, mystical religious rites. While it would not be correct to state, writes Malcolm MacEnrich, that the existence of hospitals today is a direct result of Christianity. Nevertheless, it is true that the doctrines preached by Jesus, intensifying the emotions of love and pity, gave new impetus to the establishment of hospitals which, with the advent of Christianity, became the integral part of the Church institutions.

These early Christian hospitals replaced those of Greece and Rome devoting themselves entirely to the care of the sick. During the reign of Constantine (335 A.D.) Christian hospitals reached the peak of their development. Many Romans converted to Christianity donated their palatial palaces for care of the sick. We have the knowledge of the wealthy Roman Matrons such as Paula, Marcella Fabiola and their contribution to nursing.

Religion continued to be the predominant influence in the establishment of hospitals during the middle ages. Later on, we read in the history the contribution of religious orders until the establishment of modern nursing by Florence Nightingale.

Nursing in India has been mainly on British pattern, and administration of nursing was handed down the line by virtue of seniority. With Independence we see the picture changing slowly but surely. In preparing this paper, I have kept in mind the vast differences in hospitals as per size, location and type of work, as also various levels of personnel to be managed.

Concept

To understand truly the value and meaning of Nursing Administration, we have to go into the depth to explore what administration means scientifically. The concept of administration implies the art and science. Administration can only be based on principles. Principles are set forth for securing correct action from groups of men. Administration is ordinarily interpreted as "getting the things done".

Therefore, administration may be defined as "all actions rationally performed by one person or a number of persons in concrete to fulfill a common purpose set by themselves or set by some one else for their accomplishment". Some authorities offer the sharp definition: "Administration certainly is management, but it is definitely more than management." Or to put it another way, management is something less than administration. Administrative skill is a practical art, and practice is essential to make it perfect. But practice wholly divorced from study is as likely to be limited in its results as study undisciplined by practice is likely to prove sterile and misleading. Francis Bacon put the point a good many decade ago: "to


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spend too much time in studies is sloth, to use them too much for ornament is affectation, to make judgment wholly by their rules is humour of a scholar. They perfect Nature and perfected by experience, for natural abilities are like Natural plants. They need proyning by study. And studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large unless they be bounded in experience. Administration is not just the body of knowledge. The ability to administer is skill, an art. Administration has a human aspect. There is action and reaction and a person who ventures to be an administrator, has to possess a knowledge of behavioural sciences. In any enterprise, human relations be given top priority. He envisages the pattern of behaviour of all personnel under his control. Administrative gadgets are offspring of applied philosophy whereas the present discussion is concerned with the philosophy of administration itself. Thus, in any administration, a clear understanding be given as to who is responsible to whom. And this can only be shown by proper organisation. In any business or industrial enterprise, an organisation designs the relationship of each member of the enterprise. And hospitals are no small business. Hence, as per modern trend, nursing administration demands organisation of all its personnel. “It is no accident that an age of science has developed into an age of organisation. Organised thought is the basis of organised action.”

The science and art of Nursing Administration are growing more complex due to rapidly expanding field of hospital service and the advances of the scientific medicine. And they will ever increase in complexity because the twentieth century hospital must keep pace with the social and scientific progress of civilisation. Never before in the history of civilisation has there been a greater need for efficient administration of hospitals and nursing services. Economic, professional and educational pro-

problems constantly confront the nursing administrator demanding her most judicious consideration. Administrative problems arise when two or more people co-operate to perform a common task. Nursing administration is the system of activities directed towards the nursing care of patients and includes the establishment of overall goals and policies. The needs of patients decide the purpose of organisational plan. The goal of the Nursing Organisation is to achieve the ‘excellence’.

Organisation

“Organisation” means the formal structure of authority calculated to define, distribute and provide for the co-operation of the tasks as contributions to the Whole. The whole design and relationship of the parts of the service organisation and its dynamic conduct are reflections of the philosophy and character of the administrative personnel especially those at the high level of authority. (Please see Organisation Charts, Sample I and Sample II).

Nursing Administration has to have philosophy. This philosophy be stated in line with the institutional philosophy. All the activities of the Nursing Department and the nursing personnel be guided by this stated philosophy. What we believe or what we truly value is philosophy. What we believe motivates us because a sense of obligation is created to promote what one values. Nursing Administration is nothing but directing, executing and leading the various activities for the fulfilment of the philosophy. “Happiness is found in striving toward meaningful goal.” Nursing Administration strives to achieve high standards through its philosophy and objectives. Nursing Administrator is the head of the department and has the direct or indirect responsibility for overall administration of the Hospital. She has the responsibility of organising, staffing, directing, co-

ordinating, reporting and budgeting.

Organising

That is organising the formal structure of authority through which work sub-divisions are arranged, defined and co-ordinated for the defined objectives.

Staffing

Use of personnel according to their aptitude, i.e. embracing the functions of bringing in and training the staff and maintaining favourable conditions of work.

Directing

That is the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instructions and serving as the leader of the enterprise.

Co-ordinating

That is the all important duty of inter-relating the various parts of work.

Reporting

That is keeping those to whom the executive is responsible informed as to what is going on; this includes keeping himself and his subordinates informed, through records, research and inspection.

Budgetting

Including fiscal planning, accounting and control.

It has been established beyond doubt that modern nursing service is truly in pressing need of knowledge of administration. The absence of a knowledge of administration spells confused and dispersed responsibility, wasted resources, sick morale and a defeat of the proper patient care.

The Nursing Administrator is the chief executive. What does she do? Finer states APOSSDCORB. Administration embraces the whole range, i.e. attaining, planning, organising, staffing and supervision, directing, co-ordination, reporting and budgeting. Efficient administrator begins with self-administration, adoption of his own self to the purpose. Planning that is
working out in broad outline the things that need to be done and the methods for doing them to accomplish the purpose. Florence Nightingale was the servant of a purpose and her life illustrates the administrative problem of purpose, devotion and achievement. If the Nursing Administrator has mastered the relationship of purpose and objectives, the departmental organisation activities flow clearly.

Another trend in the administration is to set up definite policies. Well developed flexible policies are the tools of management. Since the Nursing Administrator has large percentage of personnel (nearly 50 per cent.) under her control, personnel policies are most essential.

Policies
Policies are guide to actions. It saves great deal of time on the part of the administrative personnel in handling the individual cases. Also, it is the right of each member of the staff to know what is expected of her, what they are entitled to by way of privileges and rights. Actually, well understood, clearly written policy saves the time of the employee as well as the administration and avoids dissatisfaction that comes from building false hopes only to have them thwarted by an individual decision. In democratic type of administration, there is commendable desire to treat everyone alike, and sooner the nursing administration realises its value, the better it would be for the growth and progress of the personnel and the profession.

Another trend seen in Nursing Administration is decentralisation and specialisation. As per principle of administration unity of command is maintained and yet delegation to the associates and assistants is maximum. The idea is to allow full growth of each individual to achieve efficiency and the Nursing Administrator as a leader directs and forecasts the future events. Also, according to span of control it helps for better supervision of personnel. In my opinion, nurses very well can be put down categorically in each area of specialisation. Thereby, I mean to say that among nurses we have educationists, scientists and artists.

Educationists—
Are those who impart knowledge both in the Nursing School set up and at the bed side.

Scientists—
Are those who use the scientific knowledge to give better patient care.

Artists—
Are nursing administrators who need to use the different art and skill to direct the various activities towards the better care of patients.

Nursing Administrator occupies the key role in the continuous drama of any hospital. She and her staff must present a united front for the attainment of the philosophy, objectives and the goals of nursing profession and nursing department. She must have imagination, tact, initiative and sense of forebearance to form the designed pattern of all nursing activities. Nursing Administrator must have knowledge of human interaction and she must show willingness to learn more everyday about administration. We learn positive constructive items from successful experience, but from unsuccessful experience, we can learn pitfalls and methods of avoiding them. Administration is not an end itself. Its purpose in the hospital is optimal care of patients and stimulating work atmosphere for its employees.

Nursing Administrator must transmit goals to aspirants, selecting those attuned to the same purpose. Job satisfaction is needed for day to day activity and to ensure the future. One writer has stated that there are problems in each line of endeavour and days when clouds seem to overshadow all attempts, but the sun of understanding comes through and the former cloud become the framework of the beautiful sunset of accomplishment. The administrator should assume her role knowing how to administer herself and others, and she should retain it only as long as it brings satisfaction to her as well as to her colleagues.

The Nursing Administrator must become completely familiar with the total picture and must respect each department's contribution to it. Then only will she able to direct her department in a co-operative undertaking whose final objective is the best possible hospital care of the patients.

Implications of Modern Trend

1. Modern trends in nursing demand reforms in education of nurses. With the rapid advances in medicine and technology, apprentice type of educational system does not prepare the nurse to give qualified scientific care independently, which is required of present day nurse.

2. Academically prepared leaders in various specialties of nursing including education, administration and specialised care cannot be ignored anymore.

3. Putting an halt to use of students for service, as they are not qualified to give the care. This is a challenge to the present day nursing administrators.

4. Scientific research is one of the musts if we want to compete internationally as members of the profession.

5. It is time to ask whether or not each activity carried by Nursing Department actually belongs to nursing in the hospital. It is economical for nurses to do other than nursing functions. The Nursing Administrators should be in a position to delineate such functions and strive to release nurses of non-nursing responsibilities.

Conclusion
Finally I have to state that better administration can produce better public relations and more satisfied patients. This is the goal toward which we need to work together in hospitals today. The importance of the role of nursing administrator must not be minimised and she must not fail to produce what is required of her. One must remember that no organisation is better than the people who serve in it. The art of getting along with people is subtle and individual. When the morale is
high, work performance is easier; when morale is low, work, and purpose lose value and personality conflicts frustrate individuals. When tensions are high, the morale of the members is in danger. The success of administration is in seeking the best in each individual and channelling to produce better outcome. "It must not be forgotten that administration is itself, in its own right, an independent field of human activity standing on its own researches into human nature within its own sphere of activity and purpose."

Bibliography