

Approach to Clinical Nursing*

By

M. A. Ahad,

Principal, School of Nursing, Victoria Hospital, Bangalore

Introduction

Fundamental to any consideration of different approaches in nursing education is an understanding of the purpose of our educational programme, based on a philosophy underlying it and the relationship of the approach to the finished product—the practising nurse. In recent years there has been an all round appeal for improvement in clinical practices of nurses. This is natural as the modern society is more knowledgeable and rightly expects (and even demands) right type of services at the right time by the right person in the right spirit. Consequently emphasis is placed by the nursing administrators on clinical practice and by nursing educators on clinical teaching.

Philosophy

The philosophy of any School of Nursing expresses the beliefs of the members of the faculty about the education, nursing and life. Action in the implementation of curriculum is guided by and based on the philosophy which all concerned believe to be true and right. We should begin our consideration of what is good in nursing, in nursing education and in life. The answers will give us an insight of the specialised functional roles and responsibilities of the nurse within the community. The educational preparation of a student nurse should fulfil these roles and responsibilities. As already referred the need for efficient clinical practices necessitates preparation of the student nurses to fulfil the roles and responsibilities in relation to the clinical practices.

Formulating Objectives of Clinical Teaching

What are the important goals which we seek to achieve as a result of clinical teaching as an in-

tegral part of student nurses educational programme? Education is defined as "process of changing the behaviour pattern of people." Behaviour in this context includes thinking, feeling and all overt actions and reactions. Thus the objective of clinical teaching is to bring about certain agreed desirable behavioural changes in preparing the student for playing his or her role as a nurse. These objectives are formulated by gathering information on the practices, studying the needs of our community and our students from many sources. Such information is analysed and viewed thoroughly before formulating a statement of objectives. Objectives should be meaningful, stated clearly and in direct language to provide guidance to all concerned to develop the programme and patterns of teaching and to help the students to understand the programme and the content.

The objectives also include identification of content. To see the relationship between behavioural and content aspects of objectives. Tyler suggests the use of two dimensional chart showing the content on one plane and desired behavioural changes on the other. This would clarify the type of response expected from each item of content.

To take an example one of the purpose of clinical teaching would be to help students to develop necessary skills for good clinical practice. Objectives should include all such aspects which are thought necessary to realise this goal.

Selection of Learning Experiences

After developing the objectives of clinical teaching it is necessary for a School of Nursing to select those learning experiences which

will provide opportunities for the students to practise relevant responses. The learning experience should:

- (a) stimulate interaction between the student and environment in which he or she is reacting.
- (b) give satisfaction from practice to the student as implied in the objectives.
- (c) help the students to react to many aspects in one learning experience, thereby achieve more than one objectives within one learning experience.

Selection of learning experiences in clinical teaching, therefore, should take cognisance of the desirable objectives.

Organising Learning Experience

To help students attain the necessary knowledge, practice, skills and attitudes, it is necessary that the learning experiences are arranged in sequence to enable the students to learn progressively. Students are helped to integrate and unify the knowledge gained in various subjects. To attain this each unit of clinical teaching should be decided in relation to all other units of the curriculum. This ensures sequences, continuity and integration of experience in clinical field with the whole curriculum.

Selection of Teaching Method

No one method of teaching or learning is most acceptable or suited to any unit of learning or

(Continued on page 408)

*Based on a working paper issued during the UNICEF assisted All India Short Term Refresher Course for Nursing Tutors, held at Bangalore from August 15 to September 13, 1968.