

Training of Medical Nurses in the U.S.S.R.

By

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(The following article gives a glimpse about the training of the medical personnel particularly the nurses in the Soviet Union).

THERE are 22 medical schools training medical nurses and other junior medical personnel in Moscow.

Girls with an eight-year education are admitted to the medical nurses' department and girls (and some times young men) with a ten year education are admitted to the feldsher and obstetric department. The volume and nature of knowledge they get in two and a half or three years is rather impressive.

Lectures and seminars on biology, anatomy, physiology, micro-biology, pathological physiology and pathological anatomy, pharmacology and prescription-writing, hygiene and public health system fill the initial period of training. Following that are clinical subjects, such as therapy, neuro-pathology, pediatrics and others.

It may seem at first glance that there are too many theoretical subjects in the programme. But it only shows that junior medical personnel are considered not merely as executors of technical things but as real medical workers.

It goes without saying that as executors they must be faultless. This is why half of the academic time is given to practical training and probation.

Practical training begins inside the school which has excellent equipment for the purpose. And then it is continued in various medical establishments of the city. Usually one and the same person does both the functions of giving lectures as well as instruction in practical training.

At a hospital medical school students learn, under a doctor's guidance, all professional methods and acquire necessary skill, polishing to perfection tens (more than fifty in the case of medical nurses) of manipulations. The training is completed by a two-month practical work at a hospital and only after that if a student has done well—she

(or he) is allowed to pass final examinations. On passing them a student gets a diploma and is assigned for a job.

And what if a girl desires to become a doctor in future?

The school principals will help her in every way.

As has been mentioned above, 15-year old girls with an eight year schooling are admitted to the department training medical nurses. The lack of complete secondary education could bar their way to a higher educational establishment in future. To prevent this, the School, parallel with special subjects, teaches them history, literature, mathematics, foreign languages, in short, everything included in the programme of the senior forms of a general secondary school. As a result, along with finishing the Medical School they complete their general education also.

But this lengthens the term of studies, of course.

Doctor Nina Gruzinskaya, School Principal, thinks that subjects in general education are necessary even if they only add to a student's mental outlook, which is so necessary for a medical worker.

Doctor Gruzinskaya is not only an advocate but also an example of a person with an all-round education. She finished medical school in mid-thirties and worked as a sanitary doctor's assistant. In mid-forties she completed her education at a medical institute. Working as an infectionist and not at all disappointed with her profession she entered the Moscow State University and graduated in Greek and Roman literature. At the school Doctor Gruzinskaya teaches infectious diseases and Latin. On her suggestion optional courses in aesthetics and ethics are to be introduced there.

Every year several graduates, notable for their achievements and gifts, are recommended by the

pedagogical council for entering a medical institute.

The rest start working in the specialities indicated in their diplomas.

The medical School trains personnel in different fields; medical nurses, special nurses for children's medical establishments, feldshers, sanitary feldshers (sanitary doctors' and epidemiologists' assistants), laboratory assistants, X-ray laboratory assistants, etc. But the School does not set itself the aim of training specialists in absolutely all fields. There are other arrangements for doing this.

There are specialisation and advanced training courses for junior medical personnel in every big Soviet city. When a hospital or a polyclinic needs a specialist in one or another narrow fields a young medical worker is sent there. While attending the courses the medical worker retains his wage and position at his place of work.

And what about higher education for those who did not enter an institute immediately after graduation from school?

Every school graduate is entitled to pass entrance examinations at a medical institute (or any other) having worked three years in this speciality. Many exercise this right.

Tuition is free. Moreover, many students get stipends.

More than 80,000 people entered 600 medical schools of the Soviet Union in 1963.

Doctor Georgi Popov, Head Planning Specialist at the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Public Health, thinks of giving admission to more than 1,00,000 in future.

There are about half a million doctors and almost 15,00,000 junior medical workers in the Soviet Union at present.

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