
PUBLIC HEALTH

Health Programme in a School of Nursing

By

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Today the protection of the health of the students in training is recognised as a major responsibility of the school. Time lost through illness is costly and it affects the patients also by insufficient and poor quality of nursing care. Besides providing for healthful living conditions, good diet, recreation and limited number of hours of duty, it is essential to have a sound health programme and a member on the nursing staff, in charge of it.

Here I shall describe the programme that is being followed in our School of Nursing at Vellore. Every candidate who seeks admission into the school is asked to submit a preliminary health statement form along with the application. This gives the student's family health history, her own past health history and findings of the physical examination. A careful study of these findings is made and if there are any indications for treatment such as correction of sight or an X-ray to be taken, the students are asked to have them done before they come into the school in order to minimise the hospital expenditure and the time lost. A dental certificate, T. A. B. inoculation certificate, and a vaccination certificate are also required.

After the admission to the School a complete medical examination is done which includes an X-ray of the chest, Mantoux test, routine examination of urine and faeces, and blood for haemoglobin estimation and Kahn Test. Any abnormal findings are taken care of immediately. This initial

physical examination gives the young student an assurance that she is physically fit to take up her chosen profession and it also assures the school and hospital authorities that they are not admitting one who may endanger the health of others. In addition to this examination at the entrance, the weight of the student is checked every month and a complete physical examination is done once in a year. This may detect some disease in the early stage which may have developed since the last examination.

Medical care is available for the students every day and those who need any treatment and advice, report at 7 a. m. before going on duty and they are seen by the physician in charge of nurses health. Any treatment needed is done in the Out-patient Department and the medicines are given in the Nurses Home. Provision is also made for hospitalisation. We have a separate section in a ward, with six beds for the nurses. More beds are made available if a greater demand arises.

Another important part of the programme is immunization against communicable diseases. T. A. B. inoculation is given to the students every year and protection against small-pox, cholera and plague are given when there is an epidemic.

It will be useful to mention here the value of keeping health records. Each student has a "cumulative Health Record" and it is drawn up in such a way to have all the important notes such as the findings of annual

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