

NORMAL EDUCATION AS APPLIED TO NURSING

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Nursing Education should be based on progressive lines. The educational programme should be so arranged as to make for continuity and progression; for example, the students' study experience in Medical Nursing should not be split up. A certain amount of concentration and continuity is necessary to get the greatest value of such an experience.

The education of a student should be so arranged as to stimulate the student's interest and imagination and help her to independent thinking and resourcefulness. Material should be selected from real life situations, as, for instance, while teaching a nurse about various tests and immunisation, she could be having that treatment at the same time.

As far as possible, the learning experience of the student should be in terms of the adjustment of a whole individual to a whole situation. It means that all courses should be taught in such a way that integration can readily take place in the student's mind and personality.

Theory and practice are both necessary parts of the nurse's education experience. The best results can be secured as a rule when theory and practice run parallel and are closely related. As far as possible the two should be integrated and not merely correlated.

The fundamental principles of education should be made consistent with the philosophy of education and with the accepted principles of psychology.

Consider the present aims of Nursing Education. Are they adequate in view of the modern conditions of life and the demand that nurses are likely to meet with in the future?

The traditional aims are towards discipline, self-sacrificing service, practical utility, and technical efficiency. Too much stress is laid on this and on the subordination of the nurse, and too little on her growth and self-assurance. She should be given the largest measure of freedom possible, so as to be able to develop her own ideas and initiative.

The aims and methods of nursing education should be in harmony with the principles and methods of modern science, so that a nurse can develop a scientific attitude of mind and learn how to work out her own problems in a scientific way.

She must be able to co-operate with the physicians and with those who are carrying on medical research, and must learn to adjust herself to the rapidly changing conditions.

The kind of training that emphasises unquestioning obedience to orders and standardised procedures will not prepare the nurse to meet the new and constantly changing situations where intelligence and initiative are required. The same aim that is widely accepted in other fields of education should be adopted in Nursing education.

A knowledge of psychology and mental hygiene would be useful, also some knowledge of preventive medicine and of the social aspects of Nursing.

The prevention of disease is just as important a function of a nurse as the care and treatment of the sick. All nurses should be concerned with the social conditions which so directly affect the condition of the patients and their prospects of cure, therefore the social and preventive side of diseases should be taught in all nursing schools.

These elements, if they are to have any value to the patient, to the hospital, or to the student nurse herself, must come early in her training, so that they can be applied all the way through her training.

Nursing education should be so organised as to indicate the nurse's relationship with the patients, physicians, hospital, school of nursing, the household and friends of the patients, the community, and the nursing profession.

Guidance is needed for the purpose of helping people to respond in a constructive and positive way to the situations selected.

The good teacher will make her students self-directing and will encourage them to set up their own objectives of study, because the more initiative and responsibility they take, the more likely are they to learn and to continue learning. Students must exercise themselves and must learn to use their knowledge and skill in practical situations.

Synopsis

1. All professional nurses should have some knowledge of household arts, so as to be able to deal with domestic emergencies arising out of illness.

2. All nurses should be able to observe and to interpret the physical manifestations of the patient's condition and also the social and environmental factors which may hasten or delay his recovery.

3. All nurses should possess the special knowledge and skill required to deal effectively with situations peculiar to certain common types of illness.

4. All nurses should be able to apply principles of mental hygiene in nursing situations, which make for a better understanding of the psychological factor in illness.

5. All nurses should be capable of taking part in the promotion of health and prevention of disease.

6. All nurses should possess knowledge and ability to teach measures to conserve health and restore health.

7. All nurses should be able to co-operate effectively with the family, the hospital personnel, and the health and social agencies, in the interests of the patients and the community.

8. Every nurse should aim at a measure of economic security and try to provide for sickness and old age. She should conserve her physical resources, seek mental stimulus by further study and experience, and follow that way of life which enriches human personality.