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DEVELOPMENTS OF NURSING IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
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There is no simple formula by which nursing in the Region has developed. Certain forces, social, economic and cultural exert their influence on all institutions, either retarding or promoting their progress, so it is with nursing. Such cultural factors as the classic role of woman and her place in society, traditions, value systems as well as the level of health and the educational and technical advancement of the country has affected nursing and to a large extent has determined the stage at which it has arrived.

Bearing these factors in mind, we view the eighteen countries of this Region with understanding and appreciation of that which each has accomplished over the past decade.

In some of the countries, organized nursing has just begun; in some it is gradually gaining ground, in others it has undergone revolutionary change and is either advancing toward, or has already achieved recognition on the international level. At whatever stage of development nursing is in, it is significant of the courage, determination and stamina of the young women of the Region who have displayed a faith in themselves and in the profession that has transcended that which could have been insurmountable barriers.

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To give impetus to nursing and to help foster its development, Governments have had or are receiving technical guidance and in some cases economic assistance from interested philanthropic groups, other Governments, and the World Health Organization since in 1949 it established an office in Alexandria to serve the member countries of the Region.

More than ninety schools of nursing train young women and young men to be qualified nurses for the overall health services of their countries. These schools are of different types and of different educational and technical levels. They include the traditional hospital school, the school independent of the hospital and the school within a university. While most of the schools are controlled by hospitals, several have wholly or in part established their own budget and constitutions and are incorporated as separate educational units. The majority of the schools enrol students at the ninth grade level, but this practice is gradually being changed and the level raised as educational opportunities expand for young women. Nurses can be proud of the two university degree programmes that are given in the Region: one at the American University of Beirut, and the other in the University of Alexandria, United Arab Republic.

To illustrate development in nursing education in the Region examples are cited of programmes in a few of the countries.

The Higher Institute of Nursing within the faculty of medicine in the University of Alexandria, Egypt, is an inter-country project assisted by the World Health Organization. It enrolled its first group of students, twenty-two in all, in 1955. Of this number, five graduated in 1959. This course leads to the Bachelor of Nursing degree. It prepares young women for professional responsibilities including teaching and administration at the beginning level in general nursing, public health and midwifery. One graduate following a year of supervised practice in teaching and administration has gone abroad for further study which will lead to a Master's degree.

The Institute has shown notable progress since its inception. Sixteen students of the twenty enrolled in 1956 graduated in 1960 and twenty-eight are expected to graduate next year. Enrolment increased to forty-seven in 1959 and in 1960, fifty of eighty-three applicants were accepted.

Provision of suitable clinical experiences for students has been a major problem in the development of the Institute. Teaching staff of the Institute have given counselling and guidance to administrative staff of affiliated hospitals and health centres; they have conducted in-service education courses for various

levels of nursing personnel; given assistance in the training of nursing assistants and to-date conducted one course in Methods of Teaching to hakimas (nurse-midwives) The Institute has had an impact on the thirteen hospital schools of nursing (intermediate ~~secondary~~ level) and eleven assistant nurse schools as well as on nursing in general in Egypt. Its influence is spreading to other countries of the Region - for example Iraq is planning to establish its own Higher Institute of Nursing.

In Iran professional nursing education has developed in the past decade. Assistance was sought of nursing colleagues from other countries and Iranian nurses most of whom at that time had been trained abroad, left again for advanced education to return and to play an active part in establishing nursing education on a sound basis. Nursing in Iran has been confronted with the usual problems inherent in developing the profession. However, her leaders unencumbered by tradition have taken what has been proven of value elsewhere and adapted it to suit local conditions.

Today Iran has two types of schools - one for professional nursing of which there are six, and one for practical nurses, eight in number. Students enrolled in the former are required to have matriculation (grade twelve). It was reported recently that all schools had more applicants (one had two hundred) than they could enrol. National curricula were developed in 1959 for both categories of nursing. For the professional group it ~~includes~~ nursing in mental and public health, child care and obstetric nursing.

The teaching programme at the Khartoum College of Nursing, Sudan, assisted by the World Health Organization, started in 1956. The number of suitable candidates who aspired to study nursing was discouragingly small at the beginning. However, the class enrolled for the academic year 1960/1961 has sixteen students, all of whom have completed secondary education. This is the largest class to date, and brings to twenty-four the total number of students.

The curriculum as a whole is an integrated one. Public health and maternal and child health is introduced in the first term. Emphasis is placed on health education and students are receiving experience in the rural areas.

The programme commenced with the concurrent preparation abroad of staff to be the future teachers and administrators of the College. Three have returned, one with post-basic studies in public health nursing from the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta and two with Bachelor of Nursing degrees from the Higher Institute of Nursing, Alexandria. Three more Sudanese nurses at the Institute are expected to graduate and to be available next year. Beginning

with the next academic year, it is envisaged that nurses will enrol at Universities abroad for post-graduate studies on the Master's level. It is expected that graduates in the future will assume nursing leadership positions in the country and assist in upgrading other schools of nursing.

As social patterns change and educational opportunities increase, larger numbers of girls are seeking admission into secondary schools. It is expected that the future will bring more entrants to the nursing profession, as nursing is being increasingly accepted as a career for young women of the Sudan. This is especially demonstrated by the growing interest and participation of the public in the College programme.

In Libya where education for young women has come into being only recently, one appreciates the rapid changes and adaptations being made in nursing education to meet the local needs. The Tripoli School of Nursing founded in 1957 with assistance from the World Health Organization is an example of an established programme that offers progressive training opportunities in nursing. The curriculum has been so designed that the assistant nurse on completion of her course receives a period of supervised practice and in-service education following which she can apply for further study and become a fully qualified nurse. By this method, services are being more expediently covered with trained staff. The Government plans to open a second school in Benghazi modeled after the one in Tripoli.

Yemen is a country in the very early stages of nursing development. There has been no national pattern of general education for women in the past, Today UNESCO is lending assistance in this matter cooperating in a pre-nursing educational programme. Two groups of young women have already entered a training programme for health auxiliaries in Sana'a.

It has been proven that the elevation of educational standards for entrance into schools of nursing invariably stimulates an increase in the number of applicants. This has occurred in Ethiopia as in other countries. To assist in the screening of students for admission, studies have been carried out and some successful experimentation done at the ICA-assisted Itegue Menen School of Nursing, Asmara. These were later applied to all schools in Ethiopia. Tests were developed with the assistance of clinical psychologists and an adviser in tests and measurements. At present, candidates undergo an academic test based on the grade at admission. The test includes mathematics, english and science. The Otis Mental Ability Test modified and adapted to Ethiopian culture is also used. Correlation of the scores in the Mental Ability Test and in the academic

one is used to assist in the selection of students.

The value of testing is seen not only as an aid in the selection of students but also for their counselling and guidance during training and their placement in positions following completion of studies.

The curricula in several schools of nursing within the Region adopt the recommendations suggested by the International Council of Nurses as minimum standards for nursing education and modify these according to the locale. A modern trend is the inclusion of preventive and social aspects of nursing, mental health concepts and health education methodology into the basic programme of studies.

The shortage of nurses, not only confined to our Region of course, creates a situation that often requires nurses immediately following graduation to assume positions of responsibility as head nurses, supervisors, teachers or even directors of a nursing service in hospital or in the field of public health. In order that the recent graduate can function with security in the performance of these duties, a growing number of schools include introductory courses in Administration and Teaching in the basic curriculum and provide an internship period for practice under supervision.

The dearth of qualified nurse teachers and administrators for nursing services, schools of nursing, auxiliary nurse training, the nursing specialities, etc., is recognized as an outstanding deterrant to the advancement of the profession. Several countries have organized post-basic courses to meet their needs or have a fellowship programme abroad, either granted by the country itself or through national or inter-governmental organization or by philanthropic groups. A number of nurses have assumed financial responsibility for their own advanced studies. Some are diligently completing secondary school education with a view to further studies.

Pakistan offers courses in teaching and supervision. The Lebanon has courses in teaching, administration and public health. The Sudan has courses in administration, and a combined course in midwifery and public health. Tunisia, Jordan, Ethiopia, Iran, Cyprus have courses for nurses in midwifery. The Province of Egypt, United Arab Republic, plans post-basic courses in the various nursing specialities.

As countries in the Region develop plans on a long-term basis to strengthen present health services and/or expand into other fields of health, leaders in nursing have become increasingly aware that nursing in a country must be viewed in its entirety if sound developments are to be realized.

The function of nursing is reflected in the aims of the health programme and the contribution of nursing to its development is the responsibility of the profession. The technical meeting on "Nurses: Their Education and their Role in Health Programmes" held during the Ninth World Health Assembly in 1956 delineated the responsibilities which should be a part of the role of the nurse in every country. Five broad and basic functions were listed which have special implications for nursing education. They merit detailed study and analysis among nurses in the Region for they indicate future goals to be attained by the profession.

An illustration of sound administration is the creation of nursing sections within the Ministry or Department of Health of the country. In Ethiopia, Iran and Egypt such sections already exist, and in some countries there is a framework in which their establishment will be facilitated. Nursing Councils provide a measure of control and of cohesiveness within the profession. Some have cooperated with the professional association in initiating and conducting studies that affect nursing, have convened conferences for the discussion of pertinent issues and made recommendations for the formulation of policies concerning nursing education, service and conditions of employment for nurses.

Professional nursing must also be viewed in its setting of the world community. In this respect the International Council of Nurses plays an important coordinating role and provides the means whereby nurses can become acquainted and work together toward achieving goals, which are universal in nature. Pakistan, Iran and Ethiopia are members of the International Council of Nurses; some like the Lebanon are associated, Jordan is in the process of obtaining membership. Most countries have this as a goal. Countries where a high level of development has been achieved recognize the impetus that the professional association has given to development and realize that without it progress would have been much more difficult to achieve. The need for every nurse to support her professional association cannot be overly emphasized.

Marked advances have been made in nursing in the past decade. However as nursing develops, the spot-light of progress reveals weaknesses and inadequacies

that defy complacency. Some of these are the insufficient numbers of qualified teaching and administrative staff; inadequate clinical and field facilities for productive learning; lack of understanding by professional workers and the public about nursing; the dearth of literature in a country written by nurses for nurses; outdated nurse practice Acts or the absence of an Act altogether. They all present a challenge to nurses that will require concerted cooperative effort and positive action even greater in the future than that which has been shown in the past if nursing is to come into its own as an institution truly serving mankind in health as well as in sickness.

The lamp has been lit. The depth and breadth of its light depends on all of us.