



THIRD REGIONAL NURSING SEMINAR

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NURSING IN THE REGION

by

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The World Health Organization has, during the past 26 years been strenuously involved in efforts to elevate the standard of health and eliminate disease - in essence to promote the health and happiness of the whole man, throughout the world.

The WHO Regional Office, at Alexandria has had the responsibility and challenge of assisting countries in our Eastern Mediterranean Region to meet their health needs. These efforts have been multi-disciplinary, with the challenges shared by many; for, health is a complex matter, and many fields and disciplines are involved in this complexity. Our own profession, nursing, is one of these.

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The aim of all the members of the health team is, as we have indicated, to maximize for individual citizens of their countries the achievement and enjoyment of a healthy life. This aim cannot be achieved unless there is total involvement by all these disciplines.

Nursing, as a profession, cannot move or improve alone; it must inter-relate with other disciplines within and outside the health team. These joint efforts provide opportunities for nursing and other health workers to get together, exchange ideas, compare experiences, and analyze problems and difficulties; to be able to find solutions, with emphasis on proper educational preparations for developing services to meet the total health needs of the society.

Though WHO is able and willing to guide and give support to all health care activities, it will not impose ideas. Its contribution is to provide a resource of technical and professional specialists who will assist in individual tasks, but the desire and responsibility for improvement, rest squarely on the shoulders of member countries themselves.

On many occasions, WHO has provided opportunities for nurses and other health workers to get together.

The nurses of our Region had their first WHO-promoted Regional Seminar in Lahore, Pakistan, in 1960, the second in Teheran in 1966 and a Group Meeting in Nicosia (Cyprus) in 1970. Possibly some of you also attended those Seminars. They were convened at a time when

note-worthy expansion and improvement of health services, throughout the Region, was taking place. Their participants were well aware that a consistent effort on the part of the professional nurse would be demanded if she were to make a significant contribution. The opportunity which the Seminar gave for study and discussion of the present status of nursing was fully utilized and incentives given for its improvement.

Recommendations and resolutions stemming from the work of these Seminars included the following: and in these, you can look back over this period of fourteen years to see what we as nurses have accomplished, but what a long way we have yet to go.

1. Establishment or Strengthening of Nursing Divisions within Ministries of Health or a Central Nursing Division on National Level:

An active Nursing Division in the Ministry of Health is a necessity for effective administration. It should generally provide leadership and assist in planning and up-grading of the nursing educational programmes, nursing services and community health in general. This Nursing Division would also form a core of resource personnel to be consulted on all matters related to nursing.

The majority of the countries of the Region have developed a national Nursing Division in the Ministry of Health. However, further development and strengthening of these divisions are essential for advancement of nursing programmes.

2. Registration and Legislation concerning all Nurses:

Although some preliminary actions have been taken in some of the countries of this Region regarding Registration and Legislation, these matters require further studies and action on national level, and, of course, assistance and support from concerned Governments.

3. Forming National Nurses Associations and to aim towards Membership in the International Council of Nurses:

The majority of the countries of this Region are in the membership with ICN. A few others should raise the level of general education as well as raising the standard of their nursing programmes to be eligible for the membership with the ICN.

4. Establishment of a Regional Programme by WHO for Post-Basic Courses and also practical Programmes for Refresher Courses for Nurses with long-term Service.

With technical contributions and opportunities provided by WHO and mainly the desire and willingness to improve, many changes have taken place regarding nursing education in all the countries of this Region.

For example, in this country, Iran, 25 years ago, there was not one school of nursing on a higher educational level, now there are more than 20, graduating many nurses a year. Egypt is trying a new programme, educating nurses in Technical High Schools. 6000 will be graduating next year. Colleges of nursing have been established in Sudan, Iraq, Jordan, Iran and Egypt.

There is a post-basic nursing degree programme, in Pahlavi University, Shiraz. Other basic and post-basic schools in universities are providing opportunities for potential nurse leaders to advance their education on Masters and Doctorate level. Hundreds of practical and auxiliary nursing and midwifery schools have been established throughout this Region. Many fellowships in various fields of specialty, for professional advancement, were granted to nurses. But the problem of graduate nurses not returning to their own countries or migrating to others, needs careful studies and consideration. The loss of these human resources, or "brain drain", should be of great concern to the nursing leaders and their respective national authorities.

Though great achievements have been made, they are still a far cry from all that will be necessary to meet the present and future nursing needs of the Region. So then the future of nursing is in the hands of nursing leaders such as yourself, gathered here today. With greater effort and enthusiasm on your part, inspiring motivation and support from your governments, and with technical guidance from WHO much more could be accomplished.

5. Assistance with the work of a Committee to be formed under the Auspices of WHO for Development of Nursing on an International and Inter-Country Basis:

The Regional Expert Advisory Panel of Nurses was formed. "The aim of this Panel would be to enable practising nurses to make a more

meaningful contribution to the highest quality of health care, by assisting the Regional Director in identifying and suggesting ways of meeting the nursing needs of the countries". Selected members of this Panel had a meeting in EMRO early this year. They planned for this Regional Nursing Seminar and volunteered to function as moderators in the small group meetings and further discussed and recommended possible future activities of the Regional Expert Advisory Panel of Nurses.

8. A Regional Workshop may be convened on how to conduct nursing studies through using simple research methodology such as problem-solving techniques, for the improvement of health services through better nursing education and nursing service.
9. Conducting of studies and evaluation of national nursing needs, nursing resources and the utilization of nursing personnel, for the purpose of finding ways to provide for the optimum utilization of professional and auxiliary nursing personnel and the re-allocation of non-nursing activities to other trained personnel, this would involve both study of national needs and resources by a national body as well as work-sampling studies to show the utilization of nursing personnel in one nursing service department.

In accordance with these recommendations, we have now planned this Seminar to give you an opportunity to tackle some of your problems, find solutions by simple procedures and methodologies in eventually meeting the needs of your respective countries.

As evidence of the enthusiasm he shows and importance he ascribes to the development of nursing in our Region we are honoured in having our Regional Director, Dr A.H. Taba, with us for part of this Seminar.

Practically involved in the advancement of nursing in this and all other Regions is the Chief Nurse from WHO Headquarters, Miss Turnbull.

Dr Robertson, as Head of the Division of Health Manpower Development, EMRO is vitally concerned with the development of cadres of trained staff in the whole gamut of health careers.

We are looking forward, also to profound thought - provoking contributions from our consultants, Miss Simpson and Dr Cobin. We hope all these will make this a Seminar to remember.

Please remember that we WHO are here to assist you in any way we can.