CHARACTERISTICS
OF
DIPLOMA EDUCATION
IN NURSING

Council of Diploma Programs
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OF
DIPLOMA EDUCATION IN NURSING

The diploma program in nursing serves the interests and goals of qualified students who desire an education that is centered in a community health institution dedicated to the care of patients. The characteristics of the diploma program in nursing are:

- The school is in the unique position of offering a readily accessible clinical laboratory that promotes the students' understanding of the hospital climate and resources and the interrelation of other health disciplines.

- The primary purpose of the school is to focus its attention and activities on developing the potentials of students as individuals and as competent beginning practitioners of nursing.

- The school may enter into cooperative relations with colleges or universities for educational courses and/or services. The school may also enter into cooperative relationships with health care institutions and agencies in order to provide learning experiences for students.

- The school provides the necessary educational resources, facilities, and services to students and faculty.

- The philosophy and objectives of the school give consideration to the personal and professional development of the students and serve as the basis for the development of the curriculum.

- The faculty, including nurse and nonnurse members, are cognizant of concepts and trends in nursing, nursing education, and general education. They have academic preparation and experience in nursing, nursing education, or other special fields of interest that ensures a quality educational program.

- The faculty are committed to the improvement of nursing education as it relates to nursing practice and the delivery of health
care and have a unique opportunity to promote changes in nursing practice in hospitals and other health care agencies.

- Admission requirements include graduation from high school or its equivalent with successful completion of certain prerequisite courses, satisfactory achievement on pre-entrance examinations, and satisfactory assessment of personal qualities and health status.

- Students are selected by the faculty and admitted directly to the program in nursing.

- Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired in previous educational experiences for course exemption on advanced placement in the educational program.

- The faculty, utilizing trends and changes in education and health care, plan, organize, implement, and evaluate the curriculum within the framework of the philosophy, objectives, and policies of the school of nursing.

- The curriculum is designed to develop the knowledge and skill essential for beginning practice as a registered nurse.

- The curriculum includes courses in the theory and practice of nursing and courses in the biological, physical, and behavioral sciences. Learning is reinforced through the application of scientific and nursing principles in the care of individuals and groups with nursing and health needs.

- Early and substantial patient care experiences are provided in the hospital and in a variety of community agencies which serve to foster within the student a strong identification with nursing.

The graduates of diploma programs (1) are eligible to take the examination leading to licensure as a registered nurse; (2) plan, organize, implement, and evaluate plans of nursing care for individuals and groups of patients; (3) have an understanding of the hospital climate and the community health resources necessary for extended care of patients; (4) understand the role of other health disciplines and are contributing members of the health team; and (5) adjust readily to the role of beginning registered nurse practitioners in hospitals and similar community institutions.
ROLE, KNOWLEDGE, AND ABILITIES
OF THE GRADUATE
OF THE DIPLOMA PROGRAM IN NURSING

This description of the graduate's role, knowledge, and abilities, developed by an ad hoc committee and accepted by the National League for Nursing Council of Diploma Programs in May 1971, is based on seven assumptions in relation to the diploma program in nursing:

1. Preparation gives primacy to functioning in hospitals and similar community institutions
2. Understanding of the hospital climate and the interrelation of other health disciplines is fostered
3. The faculty has full authority and responsibility in the admission of students
4. The faculty has a singular opportunity to promote changes in nursing practice in hospitals
5. The graduate is capable of directing nursing care for a group of patients as well as being competent in the application of principles to the care of individual patients
6. Because of the understandings and abilities developed, the new graduate adjusts readily to the appropriate employee role in hospitals and similar community institutions
7. Graduation from the program permits initially freedom of choice in the provision of nursing service to people and subsequently academic and experiential alternatives

Role

The diploma program in nursing prepares an individual, eligible for licensure as a registered nurse, who functions as a generalist in hospitals and similar community institutions. The nurse in these settings provides nursing care to and engages in therapeutic, rehabilitative, and preventive activities in behalf of individual patients and groups of patients.

Knowledge

In order to fulfill the role, the graduate of the diploma program has knowledge of nursing as an art and a science which encompasses:

1. Physical, biological, and behavioral science principles
2. Current concepts of health maintenance and therapeutic intervention
3. Prevalent illnesses of the individual
4. Community health problems
5. Common therapeutic and diagnostic equipment
6. Roles and responsibilities of other health disciplines and other nursing personnel.
7. Principles of management for planning nursing care
8. Legal and ethical aspects of nursing practice
9. Problem-solving technics
10. Theories of learning and teaching
11. Effective ways of communicating
12. Dynamics of interpersonal relationships

Abilities

In order to fulfill the role, the graduate of the diploma program as a person:

1. Accepts self and the continuing need for personal growth
2. Accepts other persons, recognizes and believes in the essential worth of each individual
3. Establishes positive relationships by recognizing the differences in self and others
4. Respects the spiritual, cultural, and moral values of others
5. Supports in an appropriate manner the emotional needs of others
6. Inspires the confidence of patients and others
7. Expresses ideas clearly when speaking or writing
8. Recognizes the significance of nonverbal communication
9. Uses listening as a tool for communication
10. Assumes responsibility for own behavior and competence

In order to fulfill the role, the graduate of the diploma program as a nurse:

1. Ascertainsthe physical and psychological needs, habits, and resources of patients
2. Establishes priorities of nursing care for individual or groups of patients based on needs
3. Implements plans of care that are modified as necessary
4. Applies scientific principles and concepts involved in the promotion and restoration of health
5. Recognizes situations or patient responses that have significance for other members of the health team
6. Detects symptomatic changes in patients (either spontaneous or in response to diagnostic and therapeutic measures) that requires independent action and/or the need to seek more expert assistance.
7. Performs procedures (including manual skills) and activities involved in nursing care with disciplined attention
8. Responds appropriately to environmental and safety hazards whether related to physical setting, equipment, and/or actions of others
9. Participates in the total care of the patient by coordinating the skills and abilities of other nursing personnel in administering nursing care
10. Ascertains the effect of family, personnel, and personal experiences on the patient
11. Incorporates the services of appropriate community agencies in the plan for continuity of care
12. Utilizes established channels for exchange of information related to the patient’s welfare
13. Helps the patient and family understand the plan of nursing care and the role each plays to effect the fullest possible success of therapy during hospitalization and thereafter
14. Assesses the effectiveness of nursing care