

THE NEED FOR HOMOEOPATHIC ORIENTATION OF THE NURSES

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The Nurses working in Indian Homoeopathic Hospital set up are well versed with the treatment plan involving modern medicine. This is because of the way they are trained, while undergoing Nursing courses. At the present scenario there are no such course or training programme in India to educate the engaged nursing staff on the plan of treatment based on Homoeopathic principles. The authors in this article stresses on its importance, as well as suggests the areas which should be imparted on the nursing staff for improvement of Health care facilities in Homoeopathic Hospital set up.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, Nurse, Homoeopathic Nursing, Orientation.

Introduction:

Homeopathic nursing is the nursing that takes place with patients who are being treated Homeopathically in a Homeopathic hospital or Homeopathic doctors' clinic. The Nurses working in Indian Homoeopathic Hospital set up, both in Government or private sector are well versed with the treatment plan involving modern medicine. This is because of the course structure they undergo training in. The dispensing of Homoeopathic medicines, the Posology involved, the administration of placebo appears something new & confusing to them. With around 2000 nursing staff involved in the Homoeopathic health care system the matter cannot be overlooked for the greater interest of the patient. The matter can be solved to some extent with Homoeopathic orientation of the presently working nursing staff with the teaching faculties. In future, courses can be designed as per requirement to prepare Homoeopathic nurses from grass root level.

Nursing in Ancient Medicine:

It is said that the 1st man on this planet was the 1st Physician & the 1st woman on this planet had been the 1st nurse. Nursing care is something that happens to come naturally from a woman. Hence the presence of such a profession had its existence, everywhere to be found during the course of development of medicine. The ancient medicines of different civilizations show record of Nursing.

Indian Medicine: The nurses engaged in Indian system of medicine in ancient times were usually old women, who had to maintain a strict code of hygiene. The nurses were not allowed to keep big nails. Doctors & nurses were expected to be skillful & trustworthy. The Charaka Samhita written in India in the 1400BC, states that good medical practice requires a patient, physician, nurse, and medicines, with the nurse required to be knowledgeable, skilled at preparing formulations and dosage, being sympathetic towards everyone, and clean. The doctors, attendants & the nurses had to be people of high moral character.

Chinese Medicine: Practice of nursing had no existence in ancient Chinese medicine. Although Chinese medicine was quite developed in ancient time, still the idea prevailed those diseases originated from evil spirits, and on touching a sick person one may get afflicted.

Egyptian Medicine: It is learnt from the Eberus Papyrus about a lady known as Pesheset. She is known to be the 1st Female Physician of Egyptian medicine. Pesheset is known to have trained the women on midwifery in an ancient medical school of Egypt located in Sais. Midwives were widely utilized in deliveries. However, there were no female nurses in Egyptian medicine, but there existed of male nurses

Greek Medicine: Old women & men of good character were employed in nursing activities in the Greek period of medicine

Roman Medicine: The first known Christian nurse named Phoebe, has been mentioned in

Roman medicine. During the early years of the Christian Church (ca. 50 C.E.), St. Paul had sent a deaconess named Phoebe to Rome as the first visiting nurse.

Arabian Medicine: Arabian medicine mentions of having both male & female nurses for the male & female patients respectively.

Nursing In Modern Times:

The word "nurse" originated came from the Latin word "nutrire", meaning to suckle, that refers to the wet-nurse. In the late 16th century, it attained its modern meaning of a person who cares for the infirm.

From the earliest times most, cultures produced a stream of nurses dedicated to service on religious principles. Both Christian and the Muslim World generated a stream of dedicated nurses from their earliest days. In Europe before the foundation of modern nursing, it was managed by the religious groups.

The lady with a lamp, i.e Florence Nightingale is credited to have established Modern Nursing. During the 1850s Nurses neither were properly paid, nor they had any systematic training for the job. They were used as domestic staff & assigned mostly the work of cleaning & cooking. Major reform in nursing took place mostly because of the initiatives taken by Florence Nightingale & partly because of Elizabeth Twining. Nightingale was in the opinion that nursing should create the best possible environment so that the sufferer can recover & his health is restored. She also stressed on improving the living & sanitary condition along with calm environment that would facilitate holistic healing.

Homoeopathic Nursing:

The 1st official training programme for mainstream nurses had commenced in the year 1860, in the Nightingale school of Nurses in England. In the United States there were Homoeopathic hospitals with Nursing staff in the 1850s, but proper trained nursing staff were lacking. The Metropolitan Hospital in New York established in 1875, had started a Nursing training programme from 1892, although in the year 1876, Dr. S.H. Talcott attempted to start clinical and scientific lectures for nurses based on Homoeopathic system. The Hahnemann Hospital on Park Avenue in New York City, founded in 1869, had a Nurses Training School from 1895.

Ohio State University Nursing School had conducted a Homeopathic nursing training from 1914 to 1922. The lectures at Metropolitan Hospital, were delivered by staff doctors like Dr. Guernsey, Samuel Lilienthal and J.H. Demerest. During the 1st World War many nurses who had been trained in the Homeopathic hospitals were sent overseas to serve the army.

Books on Homoeopathic Nursing:

The concept of training nurses on Homocopathy is nothing new. There were books published with this view even in the nineteenth century. Two of the books worth to mention here are - *The Nurse, or Hints on the Care of the Sick* by Charles T. Harris published in 1879. The other book is titled - *Homeopathic Materia Medica for Nurses* by Benjamin C. Woodbury published in 1917.

The latter book had chapters as - *How Homeopathic Nursing Differs From Regular Nursing, Essentials of Correct Homeopathic Prescribing, Value of Careful observation in obtaining Symptoms, Isopathy, Nosodes, Remedy Selection and Action, Preparation of Medicines, Scales of Attenuation, Rules of Administration, General Rules Regarding Diet and Care of Homeopathic Cases, Relations Between Nurse and Physician, the Necessity of the Proper Understanding of Homeopathy.* Information on about thirty homeopathic remedies was included in the *Materia medica* section.

The purpose of writing the book was to make the nurses aware of the Fundamental principles of Homoeopathy, the basics of prescribing remedies & also enriching them with the indications of the frequently used Homoeopathic remedies.

Proposed Outline of Homoeopathic Orientation Programme for The Nurses:

It's the job of the physician to select a medicine based on totality of symptoms. The nurse has nothing to do with it. The nurse's job is to see whether the patient is taking the correct medicine in proper intervals. She should devote herself to careful observation of the development & changes in the disease process. It is not the Physician, but the nurse who will be always by the side of the patient, hence her meticulous observations & narration of the same will always be helpful for the physician to plan the next

course of the treatment process. Homoeopathic nursing is a little different from general nursing. Hence the nurses should also be made aware of some of the following features that should be part of the Orientation programme. The types of Homoeopathic medicines, Source of medicines, Vehicles, Medication process, Dispensing techniques, preparation of doses, easily understandable basic & standardized concept of posology, utility of administering placebo, Abbreviation of Homoeopathic medicines, making them aware of those medicines which sound almost same, or the same medicines that are available with different names & spellings, Expiry period of Homoeopathic medicines, idea on how long should the patient continue the medicine when improvement starts etc.

It has been rightly mentioned by Dr Benjamin C. Woodbury in page 45 in his book titled Homoeopathic Materia medica for nurses that Without a proper understanding of Homeopathy and an abiding faith and confidence in the physician, the patient and family will not find in their nurse a common sympathizer.

Conclusions:

Florence Nightingales philosophy of health and healing has more similarity to the holistic philosophy of Homeopathy than to the mechanistic philosophy of Allopathy. Florence Nightingale lived at a time when Homoeopathy & Allopathy were fighting for supremacy in the field of medicine. Florence Nightingale herself recommended Homoeopathy. As per her teachings Modern nursing puts stress on holistic & natural healing, which are also the basic tenants of Homoeopathic mode of treatment. Homeopathy is well suited to the training and sensitivity that nurses bring to healthcare system. According to one statistic report the death rate in Army Base Hospital in USA during the 1st World War, that was staffed with Homeopathically trained doctors and nurses, was only 1.6% and that they treated 38,000 patients. Such things can be reproduced in the modern era too. An integrative approach towards patient care taken by the Homoeopathic Physician & the Homeopathically trained nurse can change the scenario in this respect.

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