

## Allentown Hospital Association, Annual Report of the Nursing Department, 1963

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ALLENTOWN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NURSING DEPARTMENT  
July 1, 1962 - June 30, 1963

Mr. President, members, and friends of the Allentown Hospital Association, and nursing Colleagues. It is again my privilege to bring you the annual report of the Allentown Hospital Department of Nursing.

The first and most important factor to be considered in relation to both Nursing Service and the School of Nursing is that of personnel. And, while we at the Allentown Hospital have been more fortunate than many hospitals, especially those in metropolitan areas, in regard to staff, securing and maintaining a reasonably adequate staff continues to be an ever-pressing and difficult problem. A comparison of nursing staff for the past three years is as follows:

Date	Total no. Employees	No. of Full- time R.N.'s	No. of Part- time R.N.'s
June 1, 1961	514	214	90
June 1, 1962	520	200	75
June 1, 1963	508	197	73

The decrease in registered nurses might, we believe, be attributed to several factors --- new and increased hospital facilities in the area; smaller graduating classes; and a much lower salary scale than the surrounding areas. We seem to be losing increasingly large numbers of our young unmarried graduates to hospitals in New York where salaries are \$100 to \$150 a month higher than at Allentown Hospital, and where extremely attractive fringe benefits are being offered.

That we have been able to maintain fairly high standards of patient care and offer more services to our patients with a lesser number of personnel is, I believe, due

to a truly dedicated, capable, and hard-working staff.

During the past year, forty members of the nursing service staff and eight members of the faculty were enrolled in local colleges or universities, thus increasing their effectiveness as teachers and nursing administrators. In addition, several representatives of both groups attended workshops and institutes, and seven members of the nursing staff participated in the Management Training Program as conducted at this hospital by Pennsylvania State University.

Another important factor related to high quality of patient care is the rather intensive inservice-educational program conducted for all levels of personnel, but especially for those responsible for direct patient care. Under the direction of Miss Evelyn Christine, over 4800 hours of inservice education have been provided for our staff during the past year.

Thirdly, as we have strengthened our School of Nursing program, a more knowledgeable and skillful student group is able to give more effective patient care.

And lastly, in this day when so much is said about instability of staff, the Director would like to report that there have been only eleven resignations from <sup>the</sup> head nurses, supervisory, and teaching staff during the past year. And, three of these are still employed in the hospital--two are full-time, and one is a part-time employee. When one considers that the majority of persons in these positions are young women in the childbearing age, the record appears especially good. Certainly, such stability in this administrative group is reflected in many ways, including quality of patient care.

#### SCHOOL OF NURSING

Major activities or changes in the School of Nursing during the past year

are as follows:

1. The School of Nursing enrollment is currently 152. Due to intensified recruitment activities, however, we are admitting 78 young women to the School this fall and have set as our goals a freshman class of 90 in 1964, and one of 105 in 1965. Any help which those of you present can give with our recruitment problem will be sincerely appreciated by the administration and faculty of the School of Nursing.

2. In an effort to improve the recreational and social program for students, the position of Residence Director was enlarged to that of Residence and Social Director. Mrs. Jean Spencer, a graduate of William Jewel College with a major in music and a minor in education, was appointed to this position in February, and has been instrumental in providing impetus and co-ordination for this phase of our program.

The nurses chorus, under the direction of Miss Ruth Goodman, Clinical Instructor in Maternity Nursing, was the most active it has been for many years and in addition to presenting the annual Christmas concert, sang for several church and civic groups.

The basketball team, coached by Miss Ida Cooper, general staff nurse on Trexler 3, again won the regional school of nursing basketball tournament.

Other student activities included formal dances, record hops, a table tennis tournament, presentation of Christmas baskets to needy families, and an Easter Party for under-privileged children.

3. Bi-monthly religious convocations were substituted for the daily chapel services for students. These have been conducted by ministers, former missionaries, and others from the community and have been very well received by the students.

4. The change in curriculum which involved dropping the two courses in psychology at Muhlenberg College and substituting a course in social sciences at the School of Nursing seems to have strengthened our program by making the psych-social

concepts more patient centered; and by providing time for increased clinical practice during the first three quarters.

5. The major efforts of the faculty, other than those involved in teaching and routine activities, were focused on preparing materials and reports for the National League for Nursing survey for continued accreditation as conducted in March of this year. The report of this survey will not be received until July, but as several improvements have been made in the School's program since it was originally accredited in 1959, the faculty is optimistic regarding a favorable report.

#### NURSING SERVICE

In the area of Nursing Service, the following changes or activities have been undertaken during the past year:

1. Improved physical facilities and equipment such as a remodeled nurses' station on W1; showers in all the bathrooms; a second telephone on the larger units; new side-rails; overbed feeding tables, etc., have been instrumental in improving both patient care and personnel morale.
2. Placing some sixty commonly used drugs on the nursing units as stock drugs has resulted in patients getting these medications more promptly after being ordered by the doctor; and has saved hundreds of trips to the pharmacy and hours of time for nursing personnel.
3. Small brochures, briefly describing various types of laboratory or X-ray examinations which a patient might have done, were printed and are now given to patients scheduled for such examinations as a supplement to the nurses' instructions. These, we believe, have resulted in less anxiety on the part of the patient regarding his examination and in his being better prepared for it.

4. In the interest of decreasing the possibility of post-operative infections, a new pre-operative routine involving a bath with hexachlorophene soap was instituted.

5. Lastly, by placing patients in need of constant and complex nursing care in one area (W3N), we have not only provided for more adequate care for them, but also removed some of the pressure from nursing personnel which existed when these patients were scattered throughout the house--often on units where the amount of personnel was most inadequate.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

In the interest of better patient care, better education of students, and more effective use of personnel, the following recommendations are submitted.

1. That we continue to increase and intensify our recruitment activities until such time as we have a School enrollment of 250-275 students. (Quality of applicants must not be sacrificed in the interest of quantity, however.)
2. That an additional person be employed to assist with the inservice educational programs. (The Director of Nursing seriously questions whether the amount of instruction provided for our practical nurses and nursing aides qualifies them to undertake the complex nursing duties required of them. In the absence of adequate numbers of residents, interns, and professional nurses, however, practical nurses and aides must of necessity be relied upon for much of this type of care, if it is to be done at all.)
3. That in the interest of hospital economy and more effective use of trained nursing personnel, consideration be given to a reassignment of certain functions which are now the responsibility of nursing personnel but which are not really nursing duties and which could perhaps be done as well and more economically by personnel in other departments. (One study regarding such activities is now underway.)

4. That a fourth instructor be appointed to assist with the teaching of Nursing Fundamentals. (The anticipation of larger classes and increased clinical practice during the first three quarters seems to justify this need.)


5. That a closer working relationship be established and maintained between the director of volunteer groups and nursing administration.

6. That the Director of Nursing, with her associates, have increased voice and responsibility in administrating the budget of the Nursing Department.

#### WORDS OF APPRECIATION

In closing, I would again like to thank the Board of Trustees, the Hospital Administrator, and Assistant Hospital Administrator for their confidence and support; all members of the Nursing Department staff, and especially my Associates, Miss Adele Miller and Miss Ora Phillips, who so capably manage their respective departments, for their faithfulness, loyalty, understanding, and hard work; the volunteer groups who in so many ways assist us with the care of our patients; and lastly the medical staff for its helpfulness and support.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Laura E. Baughn  
Director of Nursing