

Allentown Hospital Association, Annual Report of the Nursing Department, 1960

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ALLENTOWN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NURSING DEPARTMENT

June 1, 1959 - May 31, 1960

Mr. President, Members of the Allentown Hospital Association, and Friends:
As Director of Nursing, it is again my privilege to report to you on the activities of the Nursing Department for the fiscal year ending May 31, 1960. This report has been divided into two parts - the first part relates to the School of Nursing, and the second part to the area of Nursing Service.

THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

1. Accomplishments in the School of Nursing were highlighted by a letter from the National League for Nursing on December 31, 1959, stating that the Board of Review for Diploma Programs had approved our School of Nursing for accreditation. The Director of Nursing would like to thank the members of the faculty and nursing service who worked together cooperatively and diligently toward this goal, and to express appreciation to the Board of Trustees and Hospital Administration for their support in this endeavor. The interest and cooperation of everyone in the hospital, including such persons as the Purchasing Agent, the Food Manager, and numerous others, made it possible for the faculty to achieve this recognition for the School.

2. During the past fiscal year, the faculty has been able to implement a number of the plans for integration and correlation of courses which were in the initial planning stages at the beginning of the fiscal year. A major change in our curriculum has been the discontinuation of the four weeks in diet kitchen, and a substitution of laboratory and ward conference learning experiences. This plan was worked up in minute detail and submitted to the Pennsylvania Board of Education and Licensure for approval, prior to its implementation.

3. After thorough study and evaluation of the Muhlenberg College affiliation as related to students admitted to the School of Nursing in 1958 and 1959, the faculty unanimously recommended that English be dropped from the courses taken at Muhlenberg College, and that a 30 hour course in Skills of Communication and Methods of Study be substituted at the School of Nursing. Because of the time element involved, this change will enable students to begin ward practice for two to four hours per week almost immediately after entrance into the School. It is also felt that this change, which will enable the students to be with patients early in their program, will be a highly motivating factor to both students and faculty, and will result in increased study on the part of the students.

4. The Admissions Committee, acting on the recommendation of the entire faculty, is attempting to be more selective in accepting students for future classes. This effort may result in smaller classes, but classes which it is believed will have greater potential, and will in turn improve the status of the school and the level of nursing practice at the Allentown Hospital. (To date, 57 matriculation fees have been received for the September class, and seven applications are pending.)

This decision has been based on two factors -- high attrition rate and failures on State Board Examinations. First, of the 64 students admitted to the school in 1958, only 56 remain; and of the 69 students admitted in 1959, only 51 remain. Students who withdrew gave several reasons for so doing, but the majority who left were either failing or doing poorly in class work both at Muhlenberg College and at the School of Nursing. Secondly, over the past few years, failures on State Board Examinations have been too high for a school which has as adequate faculty and clinical material as does the Allentown Hospital School. As there have been failures in all subjects, and as a rather large number of graduates have made low scores in all areas rather than in just one or two subjects, it was felt that the low achievement was to a large degree due to the potential of the class taking State Board

Examinations rather than to poor teaching. It should be added that there are many graduates who made satisfactory scores in all subjects and a few who made outstandingly high scores.

5. In comparasion to ^{that} ~~those~~ of other schools, our faculty status continues to be reasonably stable and adequate. There are twenty faculty positions, including that of the Director of Nursing, and there have been, or will be, six vacancies during the present school year. Two resulted from marriage and moving from the city; one from retirement; one from promotion within the Hospital; one from appointment to a better position in another instiution; and one member left to do graduate study. Four of these vacancies have been filled by promotions from within the Nursing Department, and applicants from within and without the Hospital are being considered for the remaining two positions.

6. Mrs. Olivia Northwood, Consultant with the Pennsylvania Board of Education and Licensure, visited the School of Nursing in March 1960. Mrs. Northwood's report and recommendations have not been received, to date.

7. Effort has been made to improve the recreational and social program for students in the School of Nursing. Basketball and softball teams have been organized and uniforms and equipment obtained; and there are plans for several additional activities -- chorus, handicrafts, and cards -- during the coming year.

NURSING SERVICE

1. The major accomplishment in the area of Nursing Service has probably been in the implementation of sounder and more realistic staffing policies in regard to afternoon and night coverage, week-end coverage, and status of part-time employees. The Director of Nursing would like to express her appreciation for the

confidence and support of the Board of Trustees and Hospital Administration in this regard, and to the Supervisors and Head Nurses through whose courage and efforts it was possible to implement these policies. It is believed that they have resulted in better morale for the entire nursing staff; and have enabled nursing administration to utilize the services of part-time workers in such manner that they are now making a real contribution toward the nursing care of patients at the Allentown Hospital.

2. Realistic staffing quotas and patterns (number of professional and non-professional personnel needed) were established for each department and nursing unit. This has resulted in improved placement of new employees, and has enabled nursing administration to assign an employee to a particular department or unit on a permanent basis. Such assignment has resulted in increased job satisfaction for the employee, and in greater continuity of patient care.

3. Mrs. Blanche Balliet, a former member of the nursing staff, returned to the Nursing Service Department on August 31, 1959 as Assistant Director of Nursing Service in Charge of In-Service Education. In addition to conducting orientation classes for non-professional personnel, Mrs. Balliet has planned and implemented an intensive and on-going in-service educational program for all levels of nursing personnel, including graduate nurses.

4. There has been increased acceptance on the part of both nursing and medical staffs of the use of technicians in the operating rooms, and in the labor and delivery rooms of the obstetrical department. Two practical nurses who will be taught the principles and techniques of surgical asepsis, were employed for the out-patient and emergency room department on May 31, 1960.

5. A Nursing Care Committee including ten representatives of the nursing staff and ten representatives of the medical staff was established and has met several times during the past year. It is felt by all members of the Committee,

as well as by hospital and nursing administration that the work of this Committee has resulted in improved inter-professional relationships between the medical and nursing staff, and in improved nursing practice.

6. The Procedure and Communications Committees of the Nursing Service Department have reorganized and brought up to date all procedure and policy books on the nursing units, and have inaugurated a system whereby they will remain up to date at all times.

7. Mrs. Rita Sinkevitch, Associate Director of Nursing Service for the past seven years, is resigning as of July 1, 1960. Mrs. Sinkevitch has made a very real contribution to the Nursing Department of the Allentown Hospital and her resignation is accepted with sincere regret. Miss Ora Phillips, Coordinator of the Obstetrical Nursing Department, has accepted the appointment to the position effective July 1, 1960.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PLANS

The Director of Nursing feels that the entire Nursing Department can justifiably be proud of its accomplishment during the past year, and includes the following recommendations for increasing its effectiveness during the next fiscal year:

1. That consideration be given to the appointment of an administrative assistant to the Director of Nursing. This person could be a non-nurse, but should be a college graduate who is especially trained in office management or in business administration. She, or he, should be a person who has some knowledge of statistical and research methods, and who would be able to compile and write monthly and annual reports, policies, memorandums, procedures, et cetera. She, or he, should also be able to participate in time-and-motion studies as they relate to specific areas

of the Nursing Department such as central supply and operating room workroom, and to assist in the establishing of sound office practices and procedures in the School of Nursing and Nursing Service Departments, and in the clinical nursing units. Such appointment would free the Director of Nursing from several time consuming duties and would permit her to spend more time in the clinical areas and class rooms, and to concentrate on staff development.

2. That consideration be given to the appointment of an instructor to assist the Assistant Director of In-Service Education in the selection, testing, and training of non-professional employees. Such appointment seems indicated in view of the fact that we shall in all probability continue to need and use a large number of non-professional workers.

3. That consideration be given to the allocation of additional office space for the nursing service supervisors when the new hospital addition is ready for occupancy. There is special need for offices on, or adjacent to the operating rooms and the medical and surgical units for the supervisory staffs in those areas.

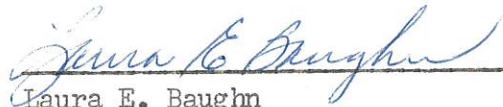
4. That in making future appointments to the positions of supervisor and head nurse, consideration be given only to those applicants who have had adequate academic qualifications in the area of personnel or nursing administration; or who lacking such qualifications, will agree to prepare themselves for their positions by taking at least one ^{college or university} course per term until they have completed a minimum of eighteen hours credit.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

In closing I should again like to say that it has been a challenge and pleasure to serve as your Nursing Department Director this past year. I would

also like to express my appreciation to the Board of Trustees and to the Administrator and Assistant Administrator of the Hospital for their support and confidence; to the several volunteer groups without whose help the work of the nursing department would have been far more difficult; to the medical staff for their advice on many matters and for their invaluable assistance in teaching both students and nursing service personnel; to the faculty for their cooperation and efforts towards securing accreditation and conducting a good teaching program; to the supervisory and head nurse staff for their efforts towards securing accreditation and towards providing the best possible care for our patients; to all nursing personnel, including general staff nurses, practical nurses, technicians, nursing aides, and others through whose concerted efforts our patients have received reasonably good care; and lastly to my Associates and Assistants in the educational and service areas without whose thinking, cooperation, and help it would have been impossible to carry out my duties as Director of Nursing this past year.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura E. Baughn
Director of Nursing