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Our Practical Nursing School 11-58



The Practical Nursing Department of the Kapiolani Technical School under the direction of Mr. David Lynn, Principal, and Mr. Albert J. Feirer, Director of Trade and Industrial Education, is the only approved school in the Territory of Hawaii for training practical nurses.

The aims and objectives of this program are to prepare selected men and women for a career in practical nursing through the development of basic nursing knowledge and skills which enable them to give effective care to the sick and to promote positive health; to provide sound instruction for the student so that the student may achieve a solid foundation in the principles of practical nursing; to develop the necessary skills to perform the functions of a practical nurse safely and effectively and apply these principles and skills in a hospital, home, or community environment; to create an understanding of human relationships so that the student will appreciate the cooperative responsibilities in the school, the home, the hospital, and the community; to develop personal characteristics of compassion; and to function as a cooperative member of the health team.

In 1947 a group of educators met to plan for additional vocational training in the Territory of Hawaii. There was a need for trained practical nurses and since the Vocational Division of the Department of Public Instruction recognized the field as being one that would attract students, it was willing to establish a school. Minimum standards were set up by a committee of professional nurses. The guide for establishing practical nurse

programs, published by the Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, was used in the development of the course. The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce generously provided funds for the purchase of equipment.

The opening day in October of 1947 saw two full-time and one part-time instructor greeting the first class of 22 students. Each year three groups of men and women have been enrolled. They come from all the neighboring islands and range in age from 18 to 50. The smallest group enrolled had 16 students. For the September class of this year the largest group, 36 students, has been accepted. There will be two men in this class to bring our male graduates to a total of 16.

A committee representing all affiliating agencies, the school staff, a social worker, and an expert in vocational information and guidance participates in the selection of students. Factors considered are the National League for Nursing Pre-Admission Classification Examination, high school records which include aptitude tests, references, and personal interviews.

During the first 16 weeks the student spends a seven-hour, five-day week at the school. This is a modern two-story building with well-equipped classrooms and laboratories. Preclinical instruction includes Nursing Principles and Skills, Personal and Vocational Relationships, Body Structure and Functions, Nutrition and Diet Therapy, Obstetrics and the Newborn, and Meeting the Needs of Children and Adolescents. Students are taken into several hospitals for 12 to 16 hours of actual patient care and are under close supervision by the school staff during this period.

The 32 weeks of clinical experience which follow consist of medical, surgical, obstetrical, pediatric, and psychiatric nursing. In the psychiatric hospital a two-week unit of tuberculosis nursing is included. Nursing in the home and experience with the preschool child give additional training. During the clinical period about 200 hours of related class work, including information on community health facilities, is given. This instruction is provided by the affiliating hospital staff and the home school.

Usually one-third of the class affiliates at Hilo Memorial Hospital for 22 weeks of the clinical period and returns to complete the course in Honolulu. Experience there includes medical, surgical, and pediatric nursing as well as two weeks each at Olaa (geriatrics) and three weeks at Pepeekeo (a plantation dispensary).

Since its beginning, many changes have been made in the school such as the increase in the length of the course from 36 weeks to one year and the addition of one full-time and one part-time instructor. The greatest development, how-

ever, has been in the curriculum. Because of the greater utilization by hospitals of practical nurses, the number and complexity of procedures taught has increased to include catheterization, bladder irrigation, Levine feeding, discontinuing of intravenous and, under some circumstances, the giving of oral and hypodermic medication. With the administration of powerful and rapid acting drugs, the practical nurse student has been instructed to be more alert to symptoms and the importance of reporting them to professional nurses. Nursing the total patient, understanding of patient needs, and the importance of teaching health to the patient are also included in the curriculum.

In its 11 years of operation the school has also organized one two-year evening extension course on Maui, two on Hawaii, and three on Oahu. The Kapiolani Technical School has qualified for funds from the Federal Government which have made possible the extension and improvement of the program. This has included the preparation of a handbook on vocational standards for practical nursing schools in the Territory and additional teaching equipment and assistance with teachers' salaries. Also, a special complete extension course on Kauai has been organized and is now in operation which includes hospital experience. Several postgraduate courses have been given and more are being planned for the future.

Much effort has been made to bring the need for more trained practical nurses before the public. The director participates in local high school career days and in radio and television programs. He speaks before all neighbor island high schools in the Territory. Attempts have been made to interest older prospective students such as veterans and women's club groups. Newspapers have cooperated and have been generous in providing space for publicity. There is still a great need for more well-qualified applicants.

The school has been extremely fortunate in having the inspired leadership of Mr. William Coulter, former Deputy Superintendent of Vocational Education. He has never failed to point the way to improvement in organization and curriculum. We are grateful to the Territorial Legislature of 1955 which granted funds to construct and equip a beautiful, functional, and modern building. The staff, as well as some 600 alumni, are proud of their school and are ever striving to more nearly meet the aims and objectives of the program.

Mrs. Thelma Schatterburg

Highlights of the Basic Psychiatric
Nursing Education Project
Western Regional Conference
Held at San Francisco

"A Perspective for the Integration of Mental