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King Edward's Hospital Fund for London GE.



SUGGESTIONS  
FOR THE USE OF  
HOSPITALS

CONSIDERING THE ESTABLISHMENT  
OF  
GROUP PRELIMINARY  
TRAINING SCHOOLS  
FOR NURSES

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KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON  
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## NOTES ON PRELIMINARY TRAINING SCHOOLS.

### INTRODUCTION

For some years it has been recognised that the practice of sending the newly-arrived candidate for hospital training directly to a ward without any preliminary instruction in the theory and practice of nursing is unsatisfactory. It means entirely unskilled nursing for the patient (who is quick to observe the presence of a novice), an element of strain and sometimes of shock for the girl herself, and additional responsibility for the remaining staff of the ward, since she counts immediately as one of their normal strength.

Some hospitals, therefore, have arranged preliminary courses, generally of from four to fifteen weeks' duration, during which classes of twenty to thirty student nurses are given instruction in the various subjects required for the preliminary State examination, together with demonstrations and practices in nursing treatments (on life-size models), in invalid cookery, bandaging, first aid, etc. In some cases the students go to the wards for two hours a day during the last weeks of the course, mainly as observers. They are thus accustomed gradually to ward procedures, and the course forms a useful weeding-out time for those who seem incapable of adjustment to hospital work or unable to profit by the teaching facilities.

Tredegar House, the preliminary training school in connection with the London Hospital, was opened as long ago as 1895. Guy's Hospital opened its preliminary school in 1903, and St. Thomas's in 1910. Since then almost all the teaching hospitals and some other general hospitals (municipal as well as voluntary) have established their own preliminary schools. The only obstacle to their universal adoption seems to be the financial one. The main item is the provision of accommodation for a group of students not part of the hospital staff, and for their teaching staff, together with lecture rooms and demonstration rooms (equipped as "model wards").

Formerly the teaching hospitals charged a small fee for the preliminary course, averaging about a guinea a week, but the Rushcliffe Committee were of opinion that this practice might have the effect of preventing suitable candidates from entering, and they recommended that the fees should be discontinued everywhere and salaries paid during the preliminary course.

The need for preliminary courses is no less in the smaller hospitals, where, in consequence of shortage of staff, there may be less opportunity of initiating the newcomer into her duties gradually. Here the need can be met by the establishment of co-operative preliminary schools for the benefit of groups of hospitals. Such a step was advocated by the Athlone Committee, who recognised the great value of preliminary training schools and hoped to see more of them provided.

## CONCLUSIONS REACHED IN CONSIDERING GROUP SCHEMES

DECEMBER, 1943

1. A suitable size for a group preliminary school is thirty to forty. This is an economic unit, as it would need little more staff, equipment, classroom and common room accommodation than a smaller school. It is not desirable for the tutor of a preliminary school to be single-handed, however small the school is, but two tutors with some additional help could run a school of this size. It is very important that preliminary training schools should be adequately staffed.

2. The course should be of not less than eight weeks' duration. (Some consider that twelve weeks is the ideal, but difficulties of accommodation might be sufficient to justify the arrangement of five nine-week schools per year.)

3. Group preliminary schools may be housed in hostels or other suitable buildings rented or purchased for the purpose. Alternatively, if any one of the participating hospitals in a group has suitable accommodation available this may be utilised by agreement with the other hospitals.

4. While it is desirable to plan preliminary schools as self-contained units, schemes may be approved in which some of the students live at their own hospitals (not in their homes) and attend the preliminary school daily.

5. There is no objection in principle to having students for the general course and students for the sick children's or fever course in the same school. Geographical factors may make this arrangement desirable.

6. There is no objection to the grouping of voluntary and local authority hospitals in group preliminary school schemes.

7. Affiliated training schools may either be included in a local group or grouped with their affiliated teaching hospitals, if the latter can accommodate sufficient entrants.

8. In the present circumstances, if two hospitals can co-operate in using existing accommodation in their nurses' homes or teaching departments, they should be encouraged to do so, rather than to wait for the formation of a larger group needing an additional building.

## CONCLUSIONS ADDED AFTER SEVERAL YEARS' EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKING OF GROUP SCHOOLS

MAY, 1947

9. The most important function of a preliminary training school is to prepare the students for their nursing work in the wards, not for the preliminary State examination. If the syllabus for Part I of the preliminary State examination is allowed to take first place, the course becomes an intensive one theoretically. The students may fail to gain a true impression of their real work in the wards ; those whose bent is academic rather than practical may achieve distinction, while others who would do well in the wards may become discouraged. The aim of the recommendations which follow is to help to ensure that the course is primarily a time of initiation into the care of the sick.

10. Even in group preliminary schools, the student nurses should be kept in touch with their own hospitals as far as possible. The curriculum should be so arranged that after the first two or three weeks the students are sent to the wards as supernumeraries for stated periods during the course. A suitable arrangement is for them to go for two hours a day over several weeks, or if the preliminary school is not within the hospital precincts, they may go for a half-day or day weekly. Normally, the periods of ward experience should be arranged at times when the ward sister is on duty and should be in the wards to which the student nurses are to be sent when they have completed the preliminary course.

11. Student nurses should not be admitted to the wards before going to the preliminary school. The suggestion has been made that students are less likely to leave if they begin in the wards than if they begin in the preliminary school. If this is so, it suggests that the preliminary course is failing in its function of preparing for the care of the sick, and that probably it is too intensive theoretically and not sufficiently related to actual nursing work.

12. The whole syllabus for Part I of the preliminary State examination should not be covered in detail in the school, unless the educational standard of the students is sufficiently high. Preparation for the examination should continue during the first year of training.

13. It is recommended that group preliminary schools should not serve an aggregate of more than 1,000 beds. In practice it has not been found that a large school is necessarily more economical to run than a smaller one attached to a hospital, although it may represent an economy in qualified teaching staff.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AGREEMENTS

Although groups may be formed and schools established and maintained without any formal agreement being entered into, it is suggested that an agreement should be drawn up setting out clearly the constitution, rights and duties of the participating hospitals. For this purpose the following suggestions are offered for the guidance of groups and hospitals contemplating the establishment of groups. They are not intended to form a draft agreement, although set out in this form. They merely indicate the kind of matters to which attention should be given.

1. *Name.*—The name of the Group shall be the.....  
Preliminary Training School for Nurses. (Note : a sub-title should incorporate the names of the participating hospitals.)
2. *Object and Powers.*—The object for which the School is formed is:—  
to provide, equip, maintain, carry on and manage a Joint Preliminary Training School for Nurses, and the Committee of Management shall have power to do all such acts and things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of this object.
3. *Number of Hospitals.*—The School shall be composed of at least ..... hospitals, or such other number as the Committee of Management shall from time to time determine.
4. *Government.*—The Group shall be governed by the Annual General Meeting and the persons from time to time being the President, Vice-Presidents and Governors of the participating hospitals shall together constitute the Annual General Meeting.
5. *Management.*—The general management of the School shall be vested in a Committee of Management composed of (i) two representatives, one of whom shall be the Secretary, of each participating hospital and (ii) two representatives nominated by the House Committee of the Preliminary School.  
The Committee of Management shall appoint its own Chairman and fix the place, date and time of its meetings. Three members shall form a quorum. The Committee of Management may delegate any of its powers to other Committees, but these other Committees shall not have power to incur expenditure or liabilities without the prior approval of the Committee of Management.
6. *House Committee.*—The internal and domestic management of the School shall be vested in a House Committee composed of (i) the Matrons of the participating hospitals, and (ii) the Sister Tutor of the School. The House Committee shall nominate two of its members to serve on the Committee of Management. The House Committee shall appoint its own Chairman and fix the place, date and time of its meetings. Three members shall form a quorum. All questions concerning the curricula shall stand referred to the House Committee.

7. *Conditions of Admission.*

Each participating hospital shall :—

- i. abide by the constitution as set out herein and any rules and regulations made thereunder from time to time by the Committee of Management ;
- ii. occupy in each School the number of places set opposite its name as follows :—

<i>Hospital</i>	<i>Places</i>
(a).....	.....
(b).....	.....
(c).....	.....
etc.	etc.

- iii. remain a member of the School for a period of at least three years, or such other period as shall be determined from time to time by the Committee of Management ;
- iv. give at least twelve months' notice of its intention to withdraw from the School ;
- v. return, within one month of its withdrawal, any equipment or other property in its possession belonging to the School ;
- vi. pay to the School its agreed proportion of the expenses incurred in establishing and maintaining the School ;
- vii. a participating hospital shall not :—
  - (a) accept for general training any candidate introduced to the School by another participating hospital ;
  - (b) accept student nurses for training without their having first passed through the School. The Committee of Management may, in exceptional cases, waive this regulation.

8. *Number of Schools.*—The Committee of Management shall provide ..... Schools during a period of twelve months, and at each School shall make provision for ..... places.

9. *Equipment loaned to School.*—The School shall return, within three months of the receipt of an application, any equipment or property in its possession belonging to a hospital withdrawing from the School.

10. *Finance.*—The financial year shall be the twelve months commencing.....

The School shall be financed by contributions by the participating hospitals, such contributions being based on the expenses incurred by the School and apportioned on the hospitals according to the number of places they occupy in the School, as set out in 7 (ii) above.

The ..... Hospital shall be responsible for the keeping of the accounts, minutes and other records of the School, and shall receive and disburse all moneys payable to and by the School. The ..... Hospital shall render accounts quarterly to the participating hospitals for the proportion of expenses due from them and such hospitals shall pay the amounts due from them within one month of the receipt of accounts.

The ..... Hospital shall at the end of each financial year present to the Committee of Management an audited account of the income and expenditure of the School and a Balance Sheet.

The Committee of Management, if required, shall determine which hospitals shall in rotation undertake the duties and responsibilities stated in this clause.

11. *General Meetings.*—The School shall hold a General Meeting to be called the Annual General Meeting once in every year at such place, date and time as the Committee of Management shall determine. The Committee of Management shall cause copies of the audited Accounts and Balance Sheet and a Report on the working of the School during the period of the Accounts, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting. Seven clear days' notice shall be given of every such meeting. Five members shall constitute a quorum at Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings.

The Committee of Management may call an Extraordinary General Meeting whenever they think fit and they shall do so upon written request of not less than one-third of the participating hospitals.

12. *Winding up.*—Each participating hospital shall contribute to the assets of the School in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member of the School, or within one year after it ceases to be a member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the School contracted before it ceased to be a member, and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the participating hospitals amongst themselves.



## NOTES.

A statement of the annual cost of a preliminary training school attached to one hospital was printed in the first edition of this leaflet. In the second edition it has been omitted as out of date.

In the group schools to which King Edward's Hospital Fund makes grants, the cost per student varies between £19 and £31. The cost is arrived at by dividing the annual expenditure of the school by the number of students passing through it and the variation is caused not only by differences in the type of accommodation and in general running expenses of the hostels, but also by differences in the length of the course, as between one group and another. The salaries of the students themselves are not included in the expenditure, but the salaries of all the staff of the school are included.

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The Sister Tutor Section of the Royal College of Nursing has prepared a list of the equipment recommended for a group preliminary training school. This may be found in the memorandum "Preliminary Training Schools for Student Nurses" prepared jointly by the Royal College of Nursing and the British Hospitals Association, October, 1944 (Appendix B).



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