

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London



NOTES FOR WARD SISTERS
TAKING STUDENTS FOR PRACTICAL WORK

STAFF COLLEGE

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KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON

NOTES FOR WARD SISTERS TAKING STUDENTS FOR PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

One of the most important features of the preparatory course for ward sisters is the opportunity which is given to the students to work as observers with experienced Sisters in well-run wards. We are very grateful for the co-operation of the hospitals in making this possible and of the Sisters who undertake this additional responsibility when they already have many claims on their time and attention.

These brief notes have been prepared in the hope that they may indicate the experience which is most valuable for the students and help Ward Sisters to arrange it with the minimum of effort.

First, it should be said that the course is not a clinical one. It is assumed that the students are already competent to undertake responsibility for the actual nursing of the patients. Any clinical experience which the students may gain is an extra and should not encroach on the main aims of the course. These are to help the newly appointed ward sister in three problems which confront her: how to give her student nurses all the ward teaching they need, how to bring the best out of her team of helpers and to maintain easy staff relations, and how to administer her ward with the maximum of efficiency and the greatest economy of labour.

It is suggested that it would be most helpful if the student could be accepted as one of the ward team, having the same times on duty as the Sister, and having as many opportunities as possible of seeing the Sister's way of tackling the three problems outlined above. Points of special interest to the students are:—

1. *Teaching.*

Methods of teaching nursing procedures and also of instructing the student nurses on the patients' conditions and on the reasons for the treatment given.

Supervision of student nurses' work by Sister and staff nurses.

Amount of repetition needed for each procedure before a student nurse should be left to carry it out on her own.

2. *Personal relations.*

(a) How ward routines are presented to all categories of staff.

Allocation of work.

Methods of giving instructions to nurses and receiving nurses' observations on patients.

Ways of receiving and introducing new members of staff.

Reprimand of staff.

Sister's reports to Matron on nurses.

Relations of nursing and domestic staff.

Sister's contacts with the staff of all other departments, particularly the almoners.

(b) Sister's approach to new patients, dangerously ill and "difficult" patients, visitors both individually and collectively.

3. *Ward administration.*

Sister's planning of her day.

Delegation of work.

How to set aside time for teaching.

Method of planning ward routines.

Arrangement of hours of duty.

Methods and times of reporting.

Care and maintenance of equipment and stock.

Inculcation of economy in use of hospital property, without detriment to efficiency.

Services available within the hospital.

Methods of requisitioning.

This brief outline is in no sense comprehensive. Each Sister will be able to add much from her own experience, and each is asked above all to pass on to the student those traditions which have given the ward sister her unique position of confidence, trust and responsibility. Each student is sent out for her practical experience as a learner and in no sense as a critic. Her hospital experience during the course may influence her future work far more than the lectures and discussions at the Staff College.

The Principal would be glad to answer questions or to discuss arrangements with the Sisters at any time.

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