

Editorial

Transforming Practice: The Future of Nursing

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Dear Colleagues!

From the time of Florence Nightingale, the founder of nursing profession, nursing education and profession has taken a much organized and evolved shape. Whether nursing is science or art, the debate still continues, or perhaps we have found a middle ground, that it is both. Nursing education programs not only focus on pure nursing body of knowledge but also seek and incorporate knowledge, concepts, models and theories from natural sciences like Chemistry, Physics; Social sciences like Sociology and Psychology; Management: Research Education and Pedagogy; Information Technology and Computer Science and even communication and soft skills.

While in the middle of the 20th century, formalized Diploma and Bachelor's in Science in nursing programmes were there, by 1970s the post-graduation or Masters Programme in Nursing became the next level of nursing education, with shift from general nursing graduates to specialized nursing post graduates.

Nursing research added more to the body of existing knowledge of nursing, and nursing theories and models and began to be formulated by nurse researchers and nurse scientists. Further, Doctorate in nursing and independent nurse practitioner programmes changed the narrative in nursing and its image, the nurses stopped being 'junior doctors' and became full-fledged nursing professionals with identity of their own, and not just off shoot of physicians.

By 1990s, the scope of nursing practice expanded and extended into many more diverse fields such as community, schools, in occupational health departments of businesses and industries, pharmaceutical companies, armed forces, hospice and homes, prisons and correctional facilities, health related associations, infection control, quality improvement etc.

While some roles of nurses were taken over by other emerging professions such as Nutrition and Dietetics, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Operation Theatre Technician etc., other avenues opened for nurses and scope of practice increased, as evident from earlier mentioned list of diverse fields.

Evolution of nursing profession would continue to take place and generations of nurses to come would be a witness to, and participant in it.