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History of nursing in Cameroon

The history of the nursing profession in Cameroon dates back to the colonial era. During the early 20th century, healthcare services in Cameroon were primarily provided by foreign missionaries and colonial health workers. However, it was not until the independence of Cameroon in 1960 that the nursing profession began to develop into a more structured and recognized field.

In the 1960s, Cameroon established its own nursing training institutions to address the shortage of healthcare professionals. These institutions provided basic nursing education and training to individuals interested in pursuing a career in nursing. The first nursing schools were established in major cities, such as Yaoundé and Douala, and were primarily focused on educating nurses to work in hospitals and public health centers.

As the demand for healthcare services increased, the government of Cameroon started to invest in expanding the nursing profession. This led to the establishment of higher-level nursing programs, such as midwifery, pediatric nursing, and psychiatric nursing. Nursing education was also extended to the rural areas, where community health workers were trained to provide basic healthcare services to the population.

In the 1980s, the government of Cameroon introduced nursing licensure examinations to ensure that nurses met the required standards of practice. This was accompanied by the development of professional nursing associations, such as the National Order of Nurses of Cameroon, which aimed to regulate and promote the nursing profession in the country.

Today, nurses in Cameroon play a crucial role in providing healthcare services to the population. They work in hospitals, clinics, public health centers, and other healthcare settings, contributing to the promotion, prevention, and management of health issues. The nursing profession in Cameroon continues to evolve, guided by standards of practice, professional regulations, and ongoing efforts to improve the quality of care provided to the population.