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Class: Nursing 500

Faculty: Health science

Subject: Fundamentals of Nursing

Topic: THE HISTORY OF THE NURSING PROFESSION IN CAMEROON

The history of nursing in Cameroon seemed not to have been recorded, which poses a lot of challenges getting a clear picture of how nursing has evolved in Cameroon.

Before 1884, Remedy for the sick was traditional medicine, where wives would act as the nurses. Without wives, the relatives or the traditional Doctor himself would care for the sick.

The first Cameroon nurses were trained in the Albert Nursing Home in Victoria, where Europeans and senior African Officers were treated and they were called dressers.

In 1966, Nursing education started in Bamenda in the Bamenda Nursing and Midwifery School, today the Training School for Health Personnel. Prerequisite was the GCE certificate. They graduated as SRN in 1969 and were awarded the Assistant Nursing Super certificate.

In 1970's, a French system of training=training assistant nurses and midwives as well as nurse aids was started. Meanwhile, nursing training in French Cameroon date back to the advent of Dr, Eugene Jamot who came to Cameroon to help fight a terrible sleeping sickness (trypanosomiasis). Jamot created a school in Ayos where nurse aiders were trained. He started the training of certified nurses. (Brevete) with basic requirement the first school leaving certificate (C.E.P.E).

In 1955 some of these pupils were registered for the French State Registered Nursing. With the Ordinary Certificate of Education as basic requirement. (B.E.P.C). This training continued until 1970 when the first Cameroonian States Diploma was instituted.

In 1960, the Catholic Nursing Schools of Yaoundé and Protestant Nurses Schools of Douala started training nurses. From 1962-1967, 120 French Nursing Diplomas were delivered but 99 of these were trained by the public sectors. Political reasons motivated the closing of the two schools. Shisong Catholic Hospital started training nurses in 1954, while the Bansa Baptist Hospital started in the 80's. these mission hospitals were first focused only on training their staff but lately, they are training for public consumption as private training schools.

A Center of Health Sciences was opened at the Faculty of medicine and biomedical sciences to train senior nursing staff and nurses were enrolled after an entrance examination for a two year course as nursing administrators. (TSOU, 2009). The center however shut its doors to Cameroonian students and continued the training only for foreign students. Today there are many training schools for nurses in the country. We have the University of Buea, the Catholic University of Central Africa, University of Bamenda, CATUC, Cameroon Christian University, just to name few. Presently, UB AND UCAC train nurses at the PhD LEVEL in Public Health and education, while UBA started a Masters and PhD in Nursing Sciences. Presently, the entry requirements for nursing is the advanced level GCE, and then training for three years.

The Ministry of Health selects its trainees through an entrance examination, whose candidates are awarded an SRN certificate, while the Ministry of Higher Education gets her candidates through the study of files with minimum qualification the advanced level. They are awarded a Higher national diploma at the end of their studies.

