

Evolution of nursing profession in Cameroon

Nursing training in French Cameroon dates back to the advent of Dr. Eugene Jamot who came to Cameroon to help fight against trypanosomiasis an epidemic that occurred in Ayos in Yaounde. Between 1920-1922 Dr. Jamot started training auxiliary nurses just to help him out. No level of education was needed at that time. The only qualities were a good heart, a spirit of Initiative, enthusiasm, dynamism and faith in the mission to fight the epidemic. Dr. Jamot succeeded to form teams that could move around to inspect the populations in the contaminated territories. In 1932, Dr. Jamot created a school in Ayos where nurse aides were trained. - Parallel to the above he created the training of certified nurses (Brevete) with basic requirement the first school learning certificate (CEPE). In 1955 some of these nurses were registered for the French state registered nurse exams with the ordinary certificate of education as basic requirement (BEPC). This training continued until 1970 when the first Cameroon states diploma was instituted.

The evolution of nursing in the Anglophone Cameroon is dated as far back as 1884-1914 with the arrival of the Germans in Cameroon. The 1 category of nurses were called "dresser" and they were being trained in the African hospital Victoria which is now called Limbe under the close supervision of the European Senior Officers. It was a one year course and they were expected to function basically as: Attendants to patients' wounds and minor ailments particularly gastric intestinal infections and yaws which were common at the time. There were also trained to administer injections Sterilization of instruments before use and dispense drugs. Around 1933 it was observed that there was an increase demand for nurses so the training of more personnel became imperative. This led to the creation of a new training school called Albert Nursing home where the nurses graduated with a Nigerian Registered Nurses after 4 years of training and later preceded to Nigeria to undertake midwives' course. In 1966 came the new era of nursing education in Cameroon. The state registered nurses diploma training program started in Bamenda with an entry qualification of GCE 'O' Level in at least 4 subjects with science. In 1976 the Brevete/midwives and nurse aids program were introduced and entry qualification was 4 GCE O level in one sitting in science for brevete/midwives and first school leaving certificate for nursing aids and state registered nurses entry qualification was 2'A' level in science. In few years later the qualification Brevete was GCE 'O' level at least 4 subjects. And entry into the SRN qualification was now GCE 'A' level passed in at least 2 subjects either in Art or science.