Being Professional

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# Introduction

The sheer idea of walking into a healthcare facility and taking on the task of looking after the health and wellbeing of other people and having a stake in their lives can, at times, be really overwhelming for those in the profession of healthcare. Although it is still a while before we step up to the plate and do our part as a healthcare professional, the idea is still overpowering and the cause of many sleepless nights in the past few years. Most of us are told that feeling inexperienced, incapable and unprepared for the task at hand is common. Yet, the idea of helping another person, no matter how terrifying, is still something that most of us, aspire towards. We hope to help as many people as possible and touch as many lives as we possibly can while we have the chance. Thus, even though it may take most of us a while before we can settle into our jobs, it will be an experience that most of us will remember for the rest of our lives.

The healthcare system is a complex but well-defined and well-established body. The graduate nurses that enter this system are themselves well-trained and skilled to blend in it. Therefore, it is important to understand and trust the process. The first week of work is called ‘supernumerary’ where new nurses have many shifts with the experienced staff to give them time to settle in new environment. Though nurses are given chances to work independently to provide them the confidence and development, there is always a constant support and guidance system in the clinical setting. New nurses who work in collaboration with everyone receive more respect and trust than those who do not. The nurses go through these transition stages i.e. from ‘doing’ to ‘being’ to ‘becoming’. In the first few months, new nurses and midwives receive bit of extra support as everyone knows they are new in the system. Soon enough, these nurses start understanding the process and become competent in using the resources and support available. It is important to realize that patient outcomes are a result of a collective effort of several members within a healthcare team, and nurses are an important part of that team. Graduate nurses are considered to be more analytical, reflective and critical in their profession when their theoretical knowledge combines with clinical practice.

# Critical Analysis

The history of nursing is filled with anti-intellectualism, which leads to the belief that nurses who are too academic usually tend to be constrained in terms of clinical practice. Such a belief has no basis in reality because some authorities are of the opinion that nurses need to be flexible, problem solvers, critical thinkers and should demonstrate the ability to deliver a vast range of services in various environmental settings (Cashin et al., 2015). Many researchers believe that the transition period from nurses to registered nurses and practitioners, requires enhancement of competencies for critically examining their own performance and comparing it with others’ performances. These characteristics are mainly associated with an ultimate learner and are considered highly important to provide professional nursing practice as per the new requirements of the industry (NSQHS, 2017).

Nursing has people coming in from a number of different walks of life that are motivated by concern and a willingness to understand the various means to deliver a range of services so that potential health problems and challenges can be taken care of. A number of such experiences can result in disruptions in the life of people, such as suffering, illness, loss, trauma, and grief (Anderson, Moxham, & Broadbent, 2016). According to literature, a number of such experiences are not only the privilege but also a burden for nurses to share. This encourages people to reflect on the position they hold in the healthcare facility and how they can change the life of people in a number of ways (Small, Sidebotham, Fenwick, & Gamble, 2016). It operates on the idea to help fellow human beings, while also training them to be apprehensive in case of crises and provide help, accept advice and do all that needs to be done so that the field of nursing can be epitomised (NMBA, 2016).

RNs are required to maintain their professionalism and capability for practice. They need to coordinate, determine and provide quality and safe nursing help. A comprehensive assessment along with the development of the plan, its implementation and evaluation for positive outcomes is necessary. It is part of their practice to be accountable and responsible for supervising the activities of enrolled nurses (Fong, Buckley, Cashin, & Pont, 2017). RNs may use their nursing skills for paid and unpaid purposes. They may practice by working in a non-clinical relation with the people, by researching, for policy development and management. They have to evaluate the safe and effective impacts of their services on the lives of others. It is their responsibility to practice in a way that their relationships with other health professionals are also enhanced (NMBA, 2016).

As per the standards of National Safety and Quality Health Service, healthcare professionals should get themselves engaged in operative partnerships which is required for providing quality care. It can be achieved when patients are treated with care, respect and relevant information is shared with them. These partnerships include the collaboration of patients, caregivers, families, practitioners and all the workforce in the department (Cusack, 2015). Such a system of care delivery can prove highly efficient for both patients and organisations. New nurses need to understand this standard well enough before starting their practice and integrating into the system (NSQHS, 2017). Therefore, it is important to provide support and treatment with patience and encouragement. They need to learn to integrate their teachings and lessons in practical field while adhering to the best prospective rewards for new graduate nurses (Chang & Daly, 2007).

# Discussion

The time in which a student becomes a graduate nurse, is identified as an intense period of socialization within the professional culture of the clinical world. However, in this specific context, the concept of socialization is a reverse process for the nurses as they need to learn and understand what others might demand from them. That time is the learning period where they have to take control of the new work environment as well. As a result, they develop a sense of inconsistent loyalty for the bureaucratic and the organisational systems in this profession (Chang & Daly, 2007).

The most common issues that students face during the period of transition is the gap between theoretical and practical implementation in the workplace (White, 2015). When they enter the clinical practice, they realise that what they had learned in the class is much more different than what they experience or what is expected of them (Pelvin & Thompson, 2015). They also suffer due to inadequate proficiencies in the management and execution of technical procedures and find it hard to manage all the tasks in the given time duration. They also have issues regarding drug administration, effective assessment of the patients and report writing skills (Tracy, Thorogood, Pincombe, & Pairman, 2011).

In a new environment, where they have just come out of the student life, nurses are expected to learn and implement their roles in an effective way. Often, nurses face the issues of managing the care delivery of a large number of patients at the same time. They also find it hard to work in teams and cope with the expectations of newly graduated nurses while the relative job workload is quite excessive. They also have to learn to accept the concept of accountability of their performance and that they will be responsible for making decisions and taking independent actions (ICN, 2012). For the new nurses, it is hard coping with the unanticipated happenings at the work. While ensuring proper care delivery, they also have to supervise other nurses and manage their shift hours. It is important that organisations make arrangements for graduate nurses and make them understand the process before putting them on trial and expecting quality results (Chang & Daly, 2007). They should be trained to collaborate with the workforce, staff nurses and health professionals. They should also receive proper guidance for understanding the liaison and the total care of their patients. Moreover, they should also be trained to develop competence in planning the care program and organising their tasks efficiently (NMBA, 2016).

# Conclusion

Unlike most professions, the field of nursing revolves around the process of giving and taking. This is a process through which newly registered nurses learn to behave as nurses, especially in the hospital setting. It is through this process that many students learn to behave as new registered nurses in hospital settings. They learn to behave in a manner that is culturally prescribed to the workplace and is customized to the rules and standards observed. With due time and process, the idealized role and the actualized role in the working environment come together in a manner that turns the students graduating from nursing school into RNs in a healthcare environment.

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