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SYLLABUS
of Subjects for Examination
and
RECORD of Practical
Instruction and Experience
for the Certificate of
MENTAL NURSING

1964
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The GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL for ENGLAND and WALES
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The General Nursing Council for England and Wales

Syllabus of Subjects for Examination for the Certificate of Mental Nursing

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Name of student nurse

Date of entry to training

Index number

PREFACE

In compiling this syllabus of training for student nurses in the mental hospital the Council has had two aspects constantly in mind; (i) the modern concept of the mental hospital as a therapeutic community with its consequent effect on the role of the mental nurse and (ii) the recognised educational principle that learning has more meaning and is better retained if it is directly related to the practical situation which the student is experiencing. It is inevitable that the role of the nurse must change in accordance with developing views on the nature of psychiatric care and treatment and she must be prepared and educated to take her rightful place in the psychiatric team. The selection of the syllabus content has been based on the principle that all subject matter should be capable of being integrated with and applied to the total nursing care of the patient.

The syllabus covers three broad fields of study:

- (i) a systematic study of the human individual, both mind and body, relating normal development and behaviour with the effects of mental disorder and physical illness.
- (ii) the various skills in dealing with mental disorder and bodily diseases associated with or occurring in psychiatric patients.
- (iii) concepts of mental disorder, psychiatry and psychopathology.

It is intended that these three main streams of learning should be unfolded side by side during the three years of training. It is essential that the theoretical preparation of the mental nurse must throughout, be closely related to the practical therapeutic aspect of the work of a mental hospital and the mental health needs of the community. Psychological and psychiatric concepts should be presented to the student from the outset, side by side with an introduction to the daily routine of the mental hospital and the nurse's part in the patients' daily programme. Throughout the training the psychological, physical, social and rehabilitative aspects of the treatment of mental disorder should be developed, elaborated and integrated.

Although the emphasis is rightly on the role of the nurse in the psychiatric team, the need for a proper understanding of the physical functions of the body and physical care has not been overlooked. In order too, to give the nurse confidence in undertaking the total care of her patient, basic nursing care and some more advanced general nursing procedures are included in the syllabus, although these do not go beyond the practical experience likely to be available in the care of patients in a mental hospital.

The Examinations

- (1) The Intermediate Examination, covering those parts of the syllabus included in the first year of training, may be taken on completion of the first year of training.
- (2) The Final Examination will cover the whole of the syllabus and may be taken at any time after completion of the prescribed years of training provided that the Intermediate Examination has already been passed or the candidate is exempt from this Examination.

THE SYLLABUS

SECTION I

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF MIND AND BODY

(i) Human development and human behaviour within the family and society

Constitution as a determinant of human behaviour.

Mother, child and family relationships. Need for security and love. Effects of separation from mother, rejection and over-protection, rivalry and jealousy.

Intellectual and social development during school years.

Physical and emotional changes during puberty and adolescence; attitude towards sex, family and the community.

Attainment of maturity: responsibility, integration of personality, emotional control. Occupational and social relationships in adult life. Marriage and parenthood.

Adjustment to middle-age and old age. Physiological and psychological changes. Reactions to occupational responsibilities, children's independence, retirement, decline in mental and physical capacity.

(ii) Introduction to psychological concepts

Concepts of emotion and behaviour. Subjective and objective aspects of emotion; physiological changes accompanying emotion. Needs and drives, influence of heredity and learning; effects on behaviour. Abnormalities of emotion and behaviour.

The psychology of individual differences. Personality traits and types. Methods of psychological assessment of personality characteristics. Abnormalities of personality.

Perception. The organisation of perceptual experience. Varieties of perception. Abnormalities of perception.

The psychology of learning. Types of learning (conditioning, rote learning, insightful learning). The laws of learning and memory. Learning and memory disorders.

Concepts of intelligence. Influence of heredity and environment. Reasoning and problem solving. General and specific intelligence. Methods of assessment. Abnormalities of intellectual functioning. Applied psychology. Psychological tests of intelligence, aptitudes and personality. Remedial education. Behaviour therapy. Industrial psychology (personnel selection, time and motion study, etc.). Clinical psychology (psychological investigation of the individual case).

Unconscious mental activity. Dreams and symbols. Nature of emotional conflict. Mental defence mechanisms and their relationship to personality disorder and mental symptoms.

Social psychology. Social and cultural influences on personality development. Dynamics of group behaviour and their effect on the individual. Social and cultural factors in psychiatric illness.

(iii) Human Biology

The living cell as a unit of life.

Attributes of living organisms, with special reference to man.

Interaction between living organisms and their environment.

General structure of the human body; position and relationships of principal organs.

Relationships between form and function.

How the body moves; the skeleton and its functions; joints and muscles and their functions in relation to movement (no detailed anatomy is required).

Circulation of the blood; how this is carried out and why.

Composition and function of the blood.

Respiration; how this is carried out and why.

Why the body needs food and fluid, and how these are used; fluid balance.

Principles of nutrition; basic requirements in infancy, childhood and adult life.

Elimination; how the body disposes of waste, functions of the skin and urinary system.

Control of activity by the nervous system and hormones.

Appreciating our environment; the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

How the human race is reproduced. The functions of the male and female reproductive organs. Heredity.
The effects of emotional states on physical states.
How emotion can affect the functions of the skin, muscles, heart, lungs, bladder and alimentary system.
The reaction of the nervous system and endocrine glands to emotional stress.

(iv) **Psycho-physical disturbances and physical illness**

Main groups of disorders.
Psychosomatic conditions.
Infection by micro-organisms, congenital conditions, deficiency diseases, injury, new growths, degenerative changes.
The causes, signs, symptoms, course and treatment of diseases, including injuries, commonly met with among psychiatric patients, or associated with psychiatric disorders.

(v) **Human behaviour in relation to illness**

Effects of hospitalisation on the mentally normal and the mentally disordered patient.
Separation from family, work and community.
Strangeness of surroundings, need for information. Effects on family, social, domestic and economic difficulties, guilt feelings.
Reaction to illness and hospitalisation superimposed on the patient's own disorder; anxiety, regression, dependency, hostility and suspicion.
The nurse-patient relationship.
Convalescence and rehabilitation.

SECTION II

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF PSYCHIATRIC NURSING INCLUDING FIRST AID

(i) **Introduction**

Outline of the history and background of nursing with special reference to mental nursing.

Outline of the Mental Health Service.
The General Nursing Council and the nurse's responsibility towards it.
The Mental Hospital, its various departments and functions.
Objects of hospital treatment.
Personal qualities and attitudes required of the nurse in the mental hospital. Standards of ethical and professional conduct.
Special problems of mental hospitals.
Relationship between the nurse, the patient and his relatives.
The role of the nurse in the psychiatric team, relationship with other hospital workers.
Meeting the patient's needs and planning the patient's day.

(ii) **Ward Management**

Ventilation, heating and lighting.
Care and use of equipment.
Care, storage and handling of food.
Methods of cleaning.
Care of linen; disinfection and disposal of soiled linen.
Daily and weekly routines.
Precautions with regard to keys, cutlery, sharp instruments, poisons and other potentially dangerous articles.
Fire precautions.

(iii) **General care of the patient**

Reception and admission of patients.
Care of the patient's clothing and other belongings.
Observing and recording the patient's physical condition and behaviour.
Taking the patient's history and other particulars.
Bathing in bed and in the bathroom.
Personal cleanliness and hygiene.
Care of the mouth.
Care of the skin and of the hair, teeth, hands and feet.
Prevention and treatment of infestation.
Care of patients confined to bed. Treatment of pressure areas.

Care of incontinent patients.
Bed making, moving and lifting patients.
Serving meals.
Feeding patients. Recording food and fluid intake.
Recording weight and sleep.
Taking and charting the temperature, pulse and respiration.
Giving and removing bedpans and urinals.
Observation of urine, faeces and vomit.
Collection of specimens.
Disposal and disinfection of excreta.

(iv) Nursing care in relation to psychiatric treatment

Investigation of the patient's mental state by observation and conversation.
The keeping of nurse's notes.
Nursing care and management of depressed, confused, suicidal, destructive and violent patients, and acutely disturbed patients.
Habit training. Prevention of deterioration. Nursing care of deteriorated patients.
Psychiatric first aid; the art of listening, relief of emotional tension, counselling and reassurance.
Nursing problems arising from the transference situation.
The role of the nurse in psychotherapy by individual and group methods.
Psychoanalysis and other forms of analytical therapy; narco-analysis, hypnosis and other forms of individual treatment; group therapy.
Group dynamics; participation in management of ward meetings and discussions.
The nurse's part in current physical methods of treatment.
The role of the nurse in occupational therapy; general principles; choice of suitable occupations; utility departments; ward occupation classes; the handicraft centre; industrial units.
The role of the nurse in recreational and social therapy.
The nurse's part in rehabilitation, within the hospital and in the community.

(v) Nursing procedures

Principles of asepsis.
Aseptic techniques, methods of sterilisation and disinfection.
Control of cross infection.
Conduct of surgical dressings and other sterile procedures.
Positions used in nursing care.
Preparation of patient and apparatus for examination of eye, ear, nose, mouth, throat, rectum and genital tract.
Urine testing.
Preparation and care of patients for:
Diagnostic tests.
Collection of specimens for bacteriological and pathological examination, including cerebro-spinal fluid and blood.
Infusion of fluids.
Taking and recording blood pressure.
Administration of drugs by oral, rectal and parenteral routes.
Signs of idiosyncrasy, cumulative action, poisoning and tolerance.
Regulations under the Dangerous Drugs and the Pharmacy and Poisons Acts relating to the prescribing, storage and administration of drugs controlled by these Acts.
Administration of oxygen.
Artificial feeding.
Lavage, irrigation, catheterisation and douching.
Preparation and administration of various types of enemas.
Use and application of heat and cold.
Last offices.

(vi) First Aid, treatment in emergencies

Aims of first aid treatment.
General principles and rules to be observed.
Improvisation of equipment.
Methods of moving and carrying injured persons.
Haemorrhage. Arrest of bleeding, principal pressure points, effects of loss of blood.

Shock, symptoms and treatment.
Causes of asphyxia and methods of resuscitation.
Loss of consciousness.
Fits and convulsions.
Fractures, dislocations and sprains.
Wounds and contusions.
Burns and scalds.
Poisoning, symptoms, indications of type of poison, and methods of treatment. (See also Section II (v).)
Emergencies, e.g. fire and accidents in the ward.

SECTION III

(i) Psychopathology, Psychiatry and Psychiatric Treatment

Historical survey; nature and size of current psychiatric problems.
Causation of mental disorders; hereditary, physical and psychological factors and their interaction. Reaction to stress in the family and in institutions. Application of psychological concepts to the understanding of mental disorder.
Methods of examination; observation of signs and symptoms.
Special investigations and tests, e.g. intelligence and personality tests electro-encephalography.
Depression and its forms, mania, and the manic-depressive disorders.
Schizophrenia and the paranoid states.
Anxiety states, obsessional disorders, hysterical and depressive reactions.
Psychopathic personalities; alcohol and drug addiction; crime in relation to mental disorder.
Organic and symptomatic mental illness; diseases of the nervous system giving rise to mental disorder, or commonly met with in mental hospitals.
Psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents.
Mental subnormality; incidence and causation; features of subnormality and severe subnormality; common clinical types; methods of treatment and training; relation of mental subnormality to mental illness, psychosomatic disorders and problems.

Significance of special symptoms in relation to different forms of mental illness, e.g. violence, suicide, refusal of food, etc.
Problems of interpersonal relationships, particularly in connection with hospital treatment and family and community care.
Principles of psychiatric treatment. Physical methods in current use. Individual and group psychotherapy.
Occupational and recreational treatment. Industrial and rehabilitation units.
Beneficial and adverse factors in the hospital environment.
After care homes and hostels, non-residential care and treatment.

(ii) Legal and Administrative aspects

The structure of the National Health Service; General Practitioner, Local Authority and Hospital Services; Regional Boards and Hospital Groups.
The Mental Health Service: Types of hospitals, psychiatric units and clinics; domiciliary services; community care services.
The Mental Health Act, 1959.
Legal definitions of mental disorder and its forms.
Patients admitted informally outside the Act.
Procedures for admission, continued detention and discharge under the Act; guardianship; Mental Health Review Tribunals.
Care of patients during detention; provisions relating to leave of absence, absconding, correspondence, sexual intercourse, surgical operations.
Civil rights as affected by mental disorders; protection and management of patients' property, wills, marriage and divorce.
Crime and mental disorder; criminal proceedings; probation with reference to the Criminal Justice Act 1948; orders made by Courts under the Mental Health Act; Special Hospitals.
Children's Act; work of Children's Officer; care of children during illness of parents; Juvenile Courts.
Social services relevant to mental health; duties of the Local Authority; pensions and insurance benefits; National Assistance Board allowances; work of the Ministry of Labour in connection with training and resettlement.

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**Record of Practical Instruction and
Experience for the Certificate of
Mental Nursing**

Section 1 (pages 14 to 21)

Space is provided for the recording of all procedures learnt or observed by the student nurse in the wards and departments of the Training School. They should be completed and signed by the Sister or Charge Nurse. Two separate columns are provided so that if a treatment has been observed only, a / may be entered and signed by the Sister or Charge Nurse and should the student subsequently become proficient this may be indicated with an X followed by the signature of the Sister or Charge Nurse. The student must also sign in the appropriate column. Only one signature of a Sister or Charge Nurse is needed to indicate instruction or proficiency in each procedure.

Section 2 (pages 22 to 24)

In this section space is provided for any additional nursing procedures or experience and for educational visits undertaken by the student nurse.

Section 3 (page 25)

In this section a summary of the total periods of clinical experience gained by the student nurse must be completed and signed by the Head of the Nurse Training School before the student nurse presents herself/himself for the Final Examination.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Visit Date

- Out-Patient Clinic
- Assessment, training and rehabilitation centres provided by Local Authorities and Associated Units
- Juvenile or adult court
- Hospital and Local Authority Centres for the mentally subnormal
- Child guidance clinic
- Psychiatric unit for children
- Remand Home and/or Approved School, Boarding School for maladjusted children
- Visits to patients' homes
- Psychiatric unit of a general hospital
- Other visits (please specify)

SECTION 3

In this section a summary of the total periods of clinical experience gained by the student nurse must be completed and signed by the Head of the Nurse Training School before the student nurse presents herself/himself for the Final Examination; block terms and holiday periods are not to be included.

	From	To	Total in weeks
Newly admitted and short stay patients			
Medium and long stay patients..			
Physically ill patients			

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	From	To	Total in weeks
Geriatric patients			
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Occupational and Industrial Unit ..			
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Night duty (specify experience)			
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Other experience (please specify) ..			
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Head of Nurse Training School.....

Date.....