"... take note of our need to become a mature profession..."

I just finished reading "Five Become a Team in Appalachia" (August). I believe all in nursing could well take note of our need to become a mature profession, and recognize our interdependence with other health professionals. When we do, we will probably have the public recognition that is basic to achieving many of our goals—including third-party reimbursement for nursing services.

REBECCA CLARK CULPEPPER, R.N., TENN.

"How right the August editorial is!"

The August editorial, "It’s Vent-My-Spleen Time," really stirs one’s adrenalin. How right the editorial is! Nurses have often failed to learn "whose interest they are there to protect."

Part of the blame must fall on the shoulders of the hospital administrators, who also believe that a hospital is a place where doctors practice medicine, not an agency where people get care. Regulations laid down by medical staffs rarely consider the needs of patients.

As an educator, I believe that education does make a difference, but evidence seems to discount all teaching because health agencies certainly do shape workers into their images. Marlene Kramer’s study indicates that. (See Reality Shock: Why Nurses Leave Nursing, published by Mosby, 1974.) Will the demise of diploma education resolve the problem, or must we wait for many funerals to eliminate the “handmaiden” concept?

Nurses are always fighting an uphill battle to help people, with restrictions imposed by others holding them back. Sometimes being a nurse is depressing.

ALICE C. BOEHRINGER, R.N., N.J.

The editorial brought to mind many experiences where I, too, found the patient is the "lowest one on the totem pole.”

CAROL K. STERNBERG, R.N., N.Y.

"It’s Vent-My-Spleen Time" is a timely critique of the health care system. I am a latecomer to nursing, having first taken a master’s degree in social work. Oriented to the psychological and emotional needs of the patient, I firmly believe that health is a matter of the whole person and that the best approaches to health care recognize this.

To have a doctor say, "You go in and tell the patient anything you want. I can’t talk to him—he’s dying."...

To have a doctor say, "Don’t do any explaining because that is my business," and then take 30 seconds to "explain" a patient’s illness to him in medical terms he never heard of, leaving in such haste that the patient has no time to ask questions...

To have a nurse refuse to treat a ward patient because he is “always in a bad humor.”...

Such situations occur in any nursing area. They should challenge all of us as nurses to insist fervently, loudly, and effectively that we tune in to our patients.

MARGARET C. HEILIG, R.N., PA.

"... Sophia Palmer...

In searching through our archives, I discovered that Sophia Palmer, the first editor of AJN in 1900, was also the first president of Monroe County Nurses Association, which today is the Genesee Valley Nurses Association District #2.

DOROTHY BLEWITT, R.N., N.Y.

"... nursing home administrator...

... image problem..."

As members of the executive board of the Division of Nursing Service Administrators, Alabama State Nurses Association, we recently were made aware of a problem affecting nursing home nursing service administrators. While the hospital nursing service administrator enjoys a position of unchallenged worth and esteem, the nursing home nursing service administrator often finds herself/himself defending the importance and value of the role. The image problem exists in their relationships with associates in the hospital field of nursing and with their own nursing staff.

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