

Nursing education and training, unlike medicine and dentistry, follows three paths: (1) the diploma program which is 3 years in length and is provided by hospitals; (2) the associate degree program (requiring two years), which is based in junior and community colleges with the clinical experience being provided in hospitals affiliated with the community or junior college; and (3) the baccalaureate program in colleges and universities, which is usually 4 years in length—the clinical instruction being given in hospitals, owned or affiliated with the college or university. All three programs prepare students to become registered nurses.

In addition to the programs described above, there are graduate programs in nursing. These are of the utmost importance in preparing the teachers, the administrators, and the clinical specialists who are so essential to any expansion of enrollment in nursing programs and to high quality patient care which is fundamental to nursing education.

These graduate programs have a limited capacity and limited resources. They must be strengthened and expanded before enrollments of nursing students increase so that teachers may be available to fill the many vacancies in existing schools and to staff the faculties required for maintenance and expansion of existing schools and the new schools which must be established if the number of nursing graduates is to be substantially increased.

Nursing education is in a period of transition. An increasing number of young people who wish to become registered nurses are seeking their training in educational institutions, that is, junior and community colleges and 4 year colleges and universities. These junior colleges and 4 year colleges are seeking affiliations with hospitals to provide sound clinical training for their students. Some hospitals which have heretofore had diploma programs are affiliating with educational institutions, discontinuing their diploma programs and providing the resources for the clinical experience for students in associate degree or baccalaureate programs. During this period of transition, expansion of enrollment may be quite difficult and can take place only after the transition is completed.

Orderly development of nursing programs in educational institutions, and strengthening the hospitals as clinical components of nursing programs are essential if quality of nursing education is to be maintained and the number of nurse practitioners, teachers and administrators are to be maintained and increased in the future. All three programs, diploma, associate degree and baccalaureate, must be maintained and strengthened in this transition. Planning and cooperative efforts among institutions, their faculties and staffs and the community are essential. The recent developments in nursing education have indicated the need for Federal funds to assist and insure development of the number and types of programs needed. These developments, the changes in hospital and establishment of baccalaureate and graduate programs, the enlargement increasing demand for clinical facilities for student experience and the appropriate interlocking of education for nursing with that for other health disciplines—are straining the resources of the institutions and the agencies that have responsibilities for serving patients as well as providing learning experiences, and of the educational institutions faced with enlarging their present programs and adding new ones. Institutions, communities, States and regional groups are looking to the Federal government to support and share in their efforts to assess needs and to pool resources.

The following discussion of the resources required to increase the number of graduates in nursing by 30% and 50% is based on the assumption that non-Federal support for nursing education will increase at rates proportional to Federal support and that non-Federal matching funds for construction of facilities can be acquired by the institutions in sufficient amounts to provide the very large sums that will be necessary for increases of this magnitude.

Construction of additional teaching spaces

A 30% increase over the 1966-67 graduates (38,000) from schools of nursing would require 11,500 more graduates or a total of 49,500 per year. If this number were achieved by FY 1977, the cost of constructing the necessary additional teaching space would require an estimated \$500 million (1968 dollars) Federal share and non-Federal matching funds of \$300-\$400 million.

A 50% increase in graduates by 1982 would require an estimated additional \$175 million as the Federal share between FY 1977 and FY 1979 with non-Federal matching funds of \$120-\$160 million.