

NLN staff member, or both. A college or university may also request a visit from a generalist from a regional accrediting association when a joint visit with this group is not possible.

The purpose of the accrediting visit is to clarify the material in the self-evaluation report, to elicit additional information that may be needed, and to serve as a communications bridge between the school and the board of review which will evaluate its program. At the conclusion of the visit, usually two to three days, the visitors' report is read to the faculty and administration of the school so that they may be aware in advance of all data to be reviewed by the board. One further step is taken to assure this. Following the visit, a copy of the visitors' report is sent to the administrative head of the school and to the dean or director of the nursing program for comments and acceptance before presentation to the board of review.

The board of review which makes the evaluation is composed of nurse educators from accredited programs of the type under review, selected to represent various types of program control and sections of the country. The board approves a program for NLN accreditation for a specified number of years, and those which are accredited and those which are not are sent a written communication outlining the program's strengths and weaknesses. An accredited school may be asked to submit a subsequent report outlining the progress it has made in meeting recommendations of the board.

A school may return for evaluation at any meeting of the board of review or appeal a decision of the board. These procedures, and others in the accrediting process, are designed to assure the school's personnel that every effort is made to judge its program fairly and on the basis of concrete evidence of the way in which it meets the criteria.

NLN annually publishes lists of nationally accredited programs in nursing. These appear also in *Nursing Outlook*, the League's official magazine, and many schools tell their communities, through their newspapers and other media, when they have obtained accreditation.

ACCREDITATION COSTS

The cost of League accreditation services is borne partially by the League and partially by the schools. Methods of payment vary with type of program. For instance, senior colleges, universities, and hospital and independent schools are entitled to receive accreditation services, along with other NLN services, for the annual dues they pay for membership. Junior and community colleges and practical nursing programs enjoy subsidized membership dues, and pay a per diem fee for travel and expenses of accreditation visitors.

Non-member schools pay an over-all fee for accreditation services.

NLN's Board of Directors establishes membership dues and accreditation fees and has voted to move toward uniformity in these for all types of programs. Specific information about accreditation fees and membership dues should be obtained directly from NLN.

NLN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Accreditation is only one phase of a broad program conducted by NLN to help schools of nursing meet and maintain high standards. As a membership organization to which both schools of nursing belong as member agencies and nursing school faculty belong as individual members, NLN engages in many school improvement activities.

It offers consultation to schools of nursing to help them with pressing problems. Revision of the curriculum may be one of these. Helping a new school of nursing get underway, assisting in coordination of the facilities of several schools for educating all nursing students in a community, or the use of television in teaching may be others. Educational developments are as legion in nursing these days as they are in other fields. Any nursing school, accredited or not, may call on NLN for consultation, advice, and counsel.

Through conferences, meetings, and workshops, through studies of educational practices and the publication of research findings and other information materials, nursing schools participate in the NLN school improvement program and are aided by it. NLN provides evaluation services for testing applicants to schools of nursing and for use in determining the achievement of students during their school program. League information provides guidance to prospective students.