

Only by careful checking of stores and equipment and taking of stock before requisitioning for more is a Ward Sister is by having and keeping an intimate knowledge of stores and equipment and seeing that their use is not abused that a Ward Sister can have efficiency and economy running hand in hand in her ward.

In New Zealand our hospital system is unique. The hospitals are the property of the people. It behoves the administrative officers of these institutions under which heading comes the Ward Sister to realise their responsibility to the public and keep down the expenditure, but never to the detriment of efficiency. Not only must the Ward Sister herself do this, but she must educate her staff, both nursing and domestic, and so apportion the work that the keynote of the whole ward is efficiency, combined with economy.

A Ward Sister then, must have ability and capability.

The article is most interesting and deals concisely with the administrative aspect of a Ward Sister.

I am inclined to think a more descriptive outline would be valuable—enlarging on ways and means of gaining knowledge of cost and care of equipment and stock. Until recently this has not been introduced at all in the educational programme of a nurse and many nurses, after having completed their three or four years' training take up the duties of Ward Sister with very poor knowledge of the administrative aspect.

Efficiency plus economy is rightly stressed, but the many practical problems entailed in carrying this out are not mentioned.

It is said in the article, "the Sister represents the head of the ward." She not only represents the head, but she is the skilled master of the ward—the nurse is the apprentice, and so the nurse looks to her as one whose knowledge and ability never fails. Her influence is great.

She sets the standard and creates the atmosphere of the ward.

It is the Matron's duty to see that the ward has the correct staff, and that they are not overworked—although it is a part of the ward-sister's administrative duties to co-operate with the Matron in this, by reporting the conditions of the ward as they arise.

Miss Moore, in discussing the question, said:—

"The paper read, I think is an excellent one on the Ward Sister as an Administrator. I think my own view is that a nurse begins her administrative training in her own home, and if she has been under a wise mother, she learns the value of the things she is using in her own home. I think the public expect us to use a sort of reform in our hospitals, and if the nurses have not been taught that for twenty years in their homes, it is hard for us to create it immediately. If they come with that contribution, it is very helpful indeed. If not we have to try and show her the value of the materials she is using.

I approve of competitive returns in the way of showing what is being used and what it has cost, and the Sister eliciting the interest of the nurses to keep down that expenditure. There are many ways now of each ward keeping its own chart, showing a rise in the expenditure in that particular ward, and so a competitive spirit is generated throughout the institution, and that assists in keeping down expenditure. Everyone is not gifted in this way. Interest can be transmitted by the Sister to her nurses under her, and so seek in that way to engender that economic spirit, so that the materials will be used wisely. This aspect of the Sister as administrator is indeed a useful preparation for future positions. The ward is a miniature hospital. In the Post Graduate Course we aim in giving a course showing the wonderful power that may be transmitted to others in every branch of hospital administration.