

A TRAINING COURSE IN WOMEN'S HEALTH

Module Eleven

The Day-to-Day
Nursing Management of
Health Units
Part One

International Prototype

Developed by the Institute for Development Training, this manual, and others in the series, is intended as a prototype only. For effective use in training programs, a country adaptation focused on the needs of a specific type of trainee, followed by pre-testing, is considered essential. For information on sources of funding for adaptation workshops, pre-tests and multiple copies of the adapted manual contact:

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Introduction to Module Eleven – Part One

The head nurse occupies a pivotal leadership position in the organizational structure of the health unit. By virtue of her job and her profession, the head nurse deals with individuals and groups from different educational and social levels such as doctors, pharmacists, administrators, health technicians, and patients and their families. Specific nursing and administrative activities define the role of the head nurse in different health care settings.

This self-instructional module will provide you with the information you need to become acquainted with the daily managerial activities performed by the head nurse. The managerial activities include the distribution and organization of the nursing staff, the effective management of their time, and the organization of the work flow in the health unit. This information should enable you to perform these activities efficiently and to help others to learn them.

The module can be used in its present, self-instructional format for individualized training. It can also be used by trainers as background information for group training sessions and demonstrations.

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Instructions for the Learner

This module, which is one of a series of modules, is self-instructional. Self-instruction is a method by which you, the learner, learn by yourself from carefully sequenced materials. The module is divided into short sections of information and each of these sections is followed by a series of questions which give you a chance to practice using the information you have learned. Answers to these questions are given so that you can check your understanding of the information.

The self-instructional method allows you to learn at your own speed and enables you to check your progress as you learn the information.

Follow the steps below in order to proceed through this self-instructional module in the most effective way:

1. Read the objectives for the module. They will outline for you what you will learn and be able to do after completing the module.
2. Take the Pre-test to get an idea of what you already know and what you need to learn.
3. Read and study the information in Section 1.
4. Answer the practice questions following the section without looking back at the information. Use a separate sheet of paper.
5. Check your answers using the answer sheet on the page following the questions.
6. If any of your answers are incorrect, reread the information in the section and try to answer the questions again.
7. When all your answers are correct, go on to the next section.
8. Proceed through the rest of the sections in the same way: read section; answer questions; check answers; reread section if necessary.
9. Take the Post-test after you have completed the entire module.
10. Check your answers to the Post-test using the answer sheet at the end of the module.

Prerequisites and Objectives

Prerequisites

This module has been prepared for the nurse who has a Technical Nursing Diploma degree or higher and who occupies the position of head nurse in a health unit. This module does not require the learner to have any additional skills or background information.

Main Learning Objective:

After completing this module, the learner will be able to describe the detailed activities and daily administrative work of the head nurse in a health unit, including the distribution and organization of the work of the nursing staff, the effective management of their time, and the organization of the work flow. This knowledge will enable the learner to implement the necessary changes and improvements to achieve a high standard of work efficiency and performance.

Sub-objectives:

The following sub-objectives are individual skills that will enable you to perform the main objective listed above. You will learn these enabling skills in the 5 information sections that make up this module. The sub-objectives, or skills to be learned in each information section, will be listed again at the beginning of each section. After you complete the 5 information sections, you will be able to do the following:

1. state how the head nurse can divide the work effectively and assign the nursing activities among the nursing staff;
2. list nine factors which the head nurse should consider before she distributes the work assignments;
3. identify the information concerning the nature of work that the head nurse should be acquainted with before she distributes the work assignments;
4. identify the individual differences in skills and abilities among personnel when making work assignments;
5. list the three main methods of work assignment for nurses;
6. give examples of how the following methods are used in the different work situations: (a) the "function" method, (b) the "case" method, and (c) the "team" method;

7. identify the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three methods;
8. list at least four activities that the head nurse should do when the "team" method is used;
9. state the reason why some nurses take more time and effort than other nurses to do the same job;
10. list the six steps to follow in order to organize and use work time efficiently;
11. identify the activities within each step that the head nurse should perform to organize and use work time efficiently;
12. list seven procedures used by the head nurse to save time as well as improve her management of time;
13. describe the different types of tables used in health units: time tables, schedules, duty rosters, and program charts;
14. identify each type of table used in the health unit;
15. state the reason for using duty rosters and their application principles;
16. give an example for each type of table;
17. identify the different departments that form the health unit;
18. state the three main elements that influence the smooth organization of work flow in health units;
19. state the factors that influence the standards of health units in relation to space and architectural design and explain how problems in this area can be overcome;
20. state the advantages of organizing equipment and furniture and the disadvantages of a disorganized health unit;
21. identify the types of consumer services provided by the health unit; and
22. identify the suitable solutions which help in keeping the work flow smooth in each of the departments that form the health unit: reception, examination room, treatment room, and pharmacy.

Pre-Test

To the Learner: Before starting this module, try taking the following test. This test will give you an idea of what you already know and what you will learn in this module. You will take the same test again after you have completed the module. A comparison of your two sets of answers will give you an idea of how much you have learned from this module.

1. State how the head nurse can effectively divide the working hours and distribute the nursing activities among the nursing staff.
2. List nine factors that the head nurse should consider when she distributes the work assignments.
3. What information concerning the nature of the work should the head nurse be aware of before distributing the work assignments?
4. What are the considerations concerning individual differences in skills and abilities that the head nurse should keep in mind when she distributes the work assignments?
5. List the three main methods of work assignments for nurses.
6. Give an example of how each method of work assignment can be applied in different work situations.
7. Following is a list of some of the advantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method that corresponds with each advantage listed:
 - a. The work is done faster and smoother by using this method.
 - b. This method helps to develop a caring and understanding relationship between the nurse and the patient. It also permits a personal satisfaction for both.
 - c. This method allows the most efficient use of personnel skills and abilities.
 - d. This method allows for anticipating and facing different work situations.
 - e. The least amount of equipment and instruments are used to perform nursing activities in this method.
 - f. Use of this method helps the nurse gain the patient's confidence, cooperation, and compliance in following treatments.
8. Following is a list of some disadvantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method of work assignment that corresponds to each of the disadvantages listed:

- a. Incomplete delivery of comprehensive nursing care to the patients due to fragmenting the patient's nursing care among the nursing staff.
 - b. Diffusion of responsibility.
 - c. Does not provide opportunities to deliver health teaching to the patient.
 - d. Poor utilization of all the different nursing skills available in the health unit.
 - e. Takes longer to finish the work load.
 - f. This method is considered expensive because it relies only on highly qualified nurses.
9. List four activities which the head nurse should do when the team method is used.
 10. State the reason why some nurses take more time and effort than other nurses to do the same job.
 11. List the six steps to follow in order to organize and use work time efficiently.
 12. Following is a list of some of the activities which the head nurse does to help her use work time more efficiently. Write the step that corresponds with each of the activities listed. The head nurse should:
 - a. Set standards of performance and for evaluation of outcome.
 - b. Encourage effective communication with her staff for quick discovery of problems as soon as they occur.
 - c. Distribute the nursing activities among the nurses and assign the work and responsibilities for each nurse.
 - d. Coordinate the different abilities of the nursing staff and their work preferences.
 - e. Explain and interpret to the nurses the job description structure which identifies their functions.
 - f. List the kind of work, the different activities, and the time each nurse uses to do that work.
 13. State briefly the most important procedures to be used by the head nurse to save time as well as to improve her method for using time.
 14. Describe the different types of tables used in the health units to organize the use of time.
 15. Following are four phrases that describe different types of time tables used in the health unit to organize time. Put the name of the table in front of the corresponding phrase.
 - a. Interrupted or irregular or variable events
 - b. Long term organization of a group of activities or events that will take place in the future as well as putting the time plan

- for each part
 - c. Daily or weekly regular events
 - d. Planning the nursing staff duties alternately and in turn
16. State the three purposes for using duty rosters and give the principles underlying their application.
 17. Give an example of each of the following tables:
 - a. time tables
 - b. schedules
 - c. duty rosters
 - d. program charts
 18. What are the different departments of the health unit?
 19. State the three elements that influence the organization of smooth work flow in health units.
 20. State the factors that influence the standards of the health unit in relation to space and architectural design and how these problems can be overcome.
 21. State two advantages of having properly arranged equipment and furniture.
 22. Briefly define "new" patient and "follow-up" patient.
 23. Following is a list of some suggested solutions to the problem of overcrowding in the different departments in the health unit. Give the department name that is suitable for each of these suggestions.
 - a. Start work early.
 - b. Place visible signs on the entrance of each department with the department name and a symbol indicating its activity.
 - c. Assign a special desk for new patients and another desk for the follow-up patients.
 - d. Classify the patients into "acute" and "routine" cases with priority given to acute cases.
 - e. Prepare ahead of time those medications or solutions that are commonly used or ones that require time to prepare.
 - f. Assign specific days during week for different types of treatment.

1. Factors to be Considered before Distributing the Work Assignments Among the Nursing Staff

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this information section, you will be able to:

1. state how the head nurse can divide the work effectively hours and assign the nursing activities among the nursing staff;
 2. list nine factors which the head nurse should consider before she distributes the work assignments;
 3. identify the information concerning the nature of work that the head nurse should be completely familiar with before she distributes the work assignments; and
 4. identify the individual differences in skills and abilities among personnel when making work assignments
-

For the head nurse to be able to divide the work hours and assign the nursing activities among the nursing staff effectively, she should be completely familiar with the following:

- a. the methods of work assignments
- b. the factors that she should consider before distributing the work load
- c. how to select the suitable method of work assignment for her unit

The factors which the head nurse should consider before making staff assignments include the following:

1. Complete familiarization and knowledge of the nature of the work

This means that the head nurse should be aware of the following information:

- a. the type of nursing care required by the patients in the health units as well as the correct methods for delivering these nursing care
- b. the different types of procedures and activities done in the unit

- c. the equipment, supplies, information and resources needed and how to obtain them
 - d. the successful methods of communicating with personnel and superiors
 - e. how to maintain good human relations at work
 - f. the policies and regulations concerning vacations, rest periods, shifts, and night duty.
2. Consideration of individual variations in skills and abilities among personnel

Distribution of work assignments is not merely dividing the number of patients by the number of nurses present in the health unit. There are many factors to consider in regards to personnel abilities and skills such as:

- a. The nurse's educational qualifications
- b. Previous working experiences in the field of practice
- c. Personal skills and professional abilities
- d. The nurse's preference and attitude towards work

3. Developing the suitable plans for staff development

When making work assignments, the head nurse should consider giving the opportunity to every person to increase and further develop his/her knowledge and skills. This could be achieved by assigning different as well as new nursing activities to each nurse according to her skills, abilities, preferences. A nurse should always be given the chance to learn whenever a new machine or technique is introduced to the unit.

4. Clear identification of responsibilities and avoidance of overlapping responsibilities

This could be achieved in the following ways:

- a. stating clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each nurse when making work assignments
- b. avoiding the assignment of one task to two persons at the same time to prevent each of them from counting on the other to carry it out.

- c. If it is necessary to assign a particular task to two persons, assign clearly defined responsibilities to each person to avoid overlapping and to facilitate evaluating each of them. Also, this will help identify the responsible person when mistakes are made.

5. Arranging and organizing the different parts of the written working plan (the daily assignment sheet)

The different parts of the plan for daily duties should be arranged in a logical order so that it can be used as a work guideline and also to assure that parts of the work are not left undone. Sometimes the need arises to add more instructions to the routine work of the unit such as cleaning the dressing cart or checking the linen inventory.

6. Making sure that every member of the nursing staff knows the duties assigned to him/her

The head nurse should accurately and precisely explain the duties assigned to each nurse and written on the assignment sheet. This should encourage the nurses to ask questions in case they are not sure that they know the areas of their responsibilities or they don't know the nature of their assigned duties.

7. Expecting emergencies and always being ready for them

The head nurse should always keep the personnel working with her ready for any emergencies. The working plan should be flexible enough to accommodate for any changes without affecting the smooth flow of the daily work.

8. Observing and evaluating the personnel performance

The working plan cannot be considered complete until the head nurse makes sure that it has been carried out in good order. This includes receiving a report from every staff member about the nursing care delivered as well as the other nursing activities and any difficulties encountered.

9. Asking for volunteers whenever there is extra work to be done

Whenever there is an extra or undesirable task, the head nurse should ask for volunteers to do it. It is not good to keep asking one nurse to do these tasks all the time. It is the head nurse's responsibility to take the nursing staff's opinion on who should volunteer for the job. She should also share the task with the nurse who volunteers. This will

give the rest of the personnel a good example of cooperation and sharing work.

The Daily Assignment Sheet for Nurses
(Figure 1)

Section: Head nurse's name: Number of nursing staff:			Date: Number of patients:		
Nursing staff Team leader:	Basic duties	Special duties			

Practice Questions

1. State how the head nurse can effectively divide the working hours and distribute the nursing activities among the nursing staff.
2. List nine factors that the head nurse should consider when she distributes the work assignments.
3. What information concerning the nature of work should the head nurse be aware of before distributing the work assignments?
4. What are the considerations concerning individual differences in skills and abilities that the head nurse should keep in mind when she distributes the work assignments?

To the Learner: Turn the page to check your answers.

Answers to Practice Questions

1. The head nurse can effectively divide the working hours and distribute the nursing activities among the nursing staff by being completely familiar with the following:
 - a. different methods of work assignment
 - b. the factors that she should consider before distributing the work assignments
 - c. selecting the suitable methods of work assignments in her unit
2. The nine factors which the head nurse should consider before distributing the work assignments among nursing staff are:
 - 1) Complete familiarization and knowledge of the nature of the work.
 - 2) Consideration of individual variations in skills and abilities among personnel
 - 3) Developing the suitable plans for staff development
 - 4) Clear identification of responsibilities and avoidance of overlapping of responsibilities
 - 5) Arranging and organizing the different parts of the written working plan
 - 6) Making sure that every member of the nursing staff knows the duties assigned to her/him
 - 7) Expecting emergencies and always being ready for them
 - 8) Observing and evaluating personnel performance
 - 9) Asking for volunteers whenever there is extra work to be done
3. The head nurse should be aware of the following information:
 - 1) the type of nursing care required by the patients in the health units and the correct method for delivering this nursing care
 - 2) the different types of procedures and activities done in the health unit
 - 3) the equipment, supplies, information and resources needed and how to obtain them
 - 4) the successful methods of communicating with personnel and superiors
 - 5) how to maintain good human relations at work
 - 6) The policies and regulations concerning vacations, rest periods, shifts, and night duty
4. The considerations are:
 - 1) The nurse's educational qualifications
 - 2) Previous working experiences in the field of practice
 - 3) Personal skills and professional abilities
 - 4) The nurse's preference and attitude towards work

To the Learner: If you missed any of the answers to the questions, go back to the information section and study it again. When all of your answers are correct, go to section 2 on the next page.

2. Methods of Work Assignments for Nurses

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this information section, you will be able to:

1. list the three main methods of work assignment for nurses;
 2. give examples on how the following methods are used in the different work situations:
 - 1) the "function" method
 - 2) the "case" method
 - 3) the "team" method;
 3. identify the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three methods; and
 4. list at least four activities that the head nurse should do when the "team" method is used.
-

There are three main methods of assigning the work load among the nurses in the health units. Any of these methods can be used either individually or combined according to the patients' needs. The methods are:

1. The "function" method.
2. The "case" method.
3. The "team" method.

1. The "function" method

In this method, one or more specific nursing tasks are assigned to each nurse to deliver to all patients in the health unit. In this method there is not one nurse responsible for giving comprehensive nursing care to a particular patient.

Examples of the nursing activities assigned to a professional nurse to perform and deliver to all patients are: giving medication, changing dressings on wounds, taking specimens.

Examples of the activities assigned to the nurse assistant are: taking temperature, making the beds, giving bed baths.

Advantages of the "function" method:

1. This method requires fewer numbers of nurses and therefore is considered an economical method.
2. This method requires the least amount of equipment, instruments and articles for performing the different nursing activities.
3. This method takes less time to perform the work smoothly.
4. The nurse acquires skills in the task she is performing.

Disadvantages of the "function" method:

1. The patient does not get comprehensive nursing care because of fragmenting his care among all nurses in the unit. This will lead to neglecting the social and psychological needs of the patient.
2. This method does not help in gaining the patients' confidence and cooperation because several nurses attend him for short periods of time.
3. This method does not provide opportunities to give health education to the patient.
4. This method does not provide opportunities for training nursing students and new nurses.
5. This method does not stimulate the nurse to acquire new nursing skills or share experiences with other nurses.

2. The "case" method

This method is considered ideal for delivering comprehensive nursing care to one patient or more by a qualified nurse. This method is usually used for patients who need special nursing care, e.g., ICU patients, artificial kidney patients, and for some attendants of health units who need special care and counseling. This method is also used in teaching nursing students.

Advantages of "case" method:

1. Delivers comprehensive nursing care to the patient as an individual who has different needs and requirements.
2. Establishes an understanding and a good relationship between the nurse and the patient which bring satisfaction to both of them.

3. Gains the patient's confidence and cooperation with the nurse. This will help the patient's compliance in following the treatment plan.
4. Facilitates communication and good relationship between the nurse and the patient's family. This will help the nurse in gaining their confidence and cooperation.
5. This method helps the nurse to acquire new and different nursing skills because she performs all the nursing activities required for the patient.

Disadvantages of "case" method:

1. This method is expensive because it is only carried out by qualified nurses.
2. It is not always possible to adopt this method because of the permanent shortage in the number of qualified nurses in the health units.
3. This method does not allow the proper utilization of the less qualified but experienced nurses in the unit.

3. The "team" method

The head nurse assigns the nursing care required for a group of patients to a group of nurses. The nurses' assignment is based on their scientific, clinical, and personal abilities as well as the patients' needs. This group of nurses is called "the team."
The team consists of:

- 1) A qualified nurse who acts as a team leader
- 2) Another qualified nurse if possible
- 3) One or more assistant nurses
- 4) Nursing students if available

The team method is considered to be among the most efficient methods for distributing the responsibilities among the nursing staff. This method also provides comprehensive nursing care to the patients. The main objective of this method is the maximum utilization of all the experiences and different nursing abilities and skills.

Advantages of the "team" method:

1. Effective utilization of the personnel skills and abilities.

The skills and abilities of the members of the nursing team vary from one nurse to another. Every nurse can contribute with her skills, experiences, and opinions in administering the work

assigned to her. Therefore, the team can provide comprehensive patient care and initiate creative work beyond the individual effort. Also the team method allows the effective utilization of the supporting staff through the proper supervision by qualified nurses for the rest of the team members.

2. Good coordination of work.

Team work requires the exchange of work information among the team members, thus decreasing the interference and the overlapping of activities.

3. Anticipating and facing the different work situations.

Working as a team makes the team members capable of understanding and being familiar with the nature of work assigned to each one of them. This also makes them ready to help and replace each other whenever necessary. This way the performance of the team is more flexible and cooperative than the performance of individual nurses working on their own.

4. Creating better working relations.

The actual sharing by the members of the nursing team in carrying out the nursing activities and their readiness to support each other reduce their feelings of insecurity when faced with work problems. Also, this strengthens their relationships and creates a healthy work atmosphere.

5. Commitment to responsibilities.

When the team participates in developing the goals of the work plan and puts it into action, the team members will be ready to achieve these objectives and make the plan work successfully.

6. Facilitating evaluation of the nursing care delivered to the patients.

When individuals work in a team, the quality of nursing performance becomes more apparent. This will allow the head nurse to make use of the team members as valuable sources of necessary information required to evaluate the nursing care.

7. Providing opportunities for the nurses' professional growth and development.

Working as a team provides a chance for professional growth and skill development as well as personal and leadership abilities. Team work also provides the members with opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in some fields other than their technical specialties, such as management, supervision, and human relations.

Disadvantages of the "team" method:

It is important to mention that all the previous advantages of the team method are visible only when the team members develop a clear understanding and accept this method as a means to achieve the objectives. If the team members fail to recognize the purpose of the method and its objectives, some of the team method disadvantages will appear. The disadvantages are:

1. The need to have good communication and interpersonal skills.

It is incorrect to assume that once a group of individuals are gathered as a team that these individuals will be able to work together as a team. It is often difficult for a group of people to work as a team, because team work requires cooperation, communication, and interaction between the members and the leader as well. Without these skills, working as a team will be frustrating and discouraging and will consume a lot of energy and effort. Some individuals prefer to work alone and they don't like to share work with others. These individuals will find the continuous interaction with others as well as the required sharing and supporting of others an uncomfortable burden during work.

2. The development of conflicts between the team members.

The differences between team members in personal, education, social background and economic status are enough sources to cause conflict between them. These problems usually occur when the team's objective is not clear and when responsibilities are not clearly defined.

3. The need for more time to do the work.

The team method requires the leader to meet with the members of the team to explain the work objectives, select the suitable decisions to implement the work plan, and to know the members' reactions. This demands more time than in other methods.

4. Decrease in the individual's judgment and autonomy.

The team method is not suitable for individuals who do not like to share work with others and find it difficult to accept or approve the team's decision when this decision is different from their personal opinion.

5. Diffusion of responsibility.

Team work requires flexibility, sharing, support and understanding of others' work. The nursing care is a joint responsibility of the team members. It is difficult to define

the responsibilities and pinpoint the person who makes a mistake when it occurs.

The head nurse responsibilities when she uses the "team" method:

1. The head nurse selects the leader of the team and the members.
2. The head nurse delegates some of her responsibilities to the team leader. This, however, does not release her from being responsible for the continuity of the nursing care activities in the unit.
3. The head nurse helps the team leader and the members of the team to determine the patients' needs for care.
4. The head nurse gives instructions and guidance to personnel and patients.
5. The head nurse coordinates the work of the different teams and the different departments and the other professional groups.

Practice Questions

1. List the three main methods of work assignments for nurses.
2. Give an example on how each method of work assignment can be applied in different work situations.
3. Following is a list of some of the advantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method that corresponds with each of the advantages listed.
 - a) The work is done faster and smoother by using this method.
 - b) This method helps to develop a caring and understanding relationship between the nurse and the patient. It also permits a personal satisfaction for both of them.
 - c) This method allows the most efficient use of the personnel skills and abilities.
 - d) This method allows for anticipating and facing different work situations.
 - e) The least amount of equipment and instruments are used to perform the nursing activities in this method.
 - f) Use of this method helps the nurse gain the patient's confidence, cooperation, and compliance in following treatments.
4. Following is a list of some disadvantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method of work assignment that corresponds with each of the disadvantages listed:
 - a) Incomplete delivery of comprehensive nursing care to the patients due to fragmenting the patient's nursing care among the nursing staff.
 - b) Diffusion of responsibility.
 - c) This method does not provide opportunities to deliver health education to the patient.
 - d) Poor utilization of all the different nursing skills available in the health unit.
 - e) Takes longer time to finish the work load.
 - f) This method is considered expensive because it relies only on highly qualified nurses.
5. List four activities which the head nurse should do when the team method is used.

To the Learner: Turn the page to check your answers.

Answers to Practice Questions

1. The three main methods of work assignment for nurses are:
 - 1) The "function" method
 - 2) The "case" method
 - 3) The "team" method.
2.
 - a) In the "function" method, a specific nursing task or more is assigned to each nurse to deliver to all patients. Examples of these tasks are: giving medication, changing dressings on wounds, taking samples and specimens.
 - b) The "case" method is used to deliver comprehensive nursing care to one patient or more by a qualified nurse. This method is usually used for patients who need special nursing care, e.g., ICU patients, artificial kidney patients, and for some attendants of health units who need special care and counseling. This method is also used to teach nursing students.
 - c) In the "team" method, the nursing activities required for a group of patients are assigned to a group of nurses. The team is lead by a qualified nurse who distributes the required nursing activities among the team members based on their scientific, clinical, and personal abilities as well as the patients' needs.
3.

a) function method	b) case method
c) team method	d) team method
e) function method	f) case method
4.

a) function method	b) team method
c) function method	d) case method
e) team method	f) case method
5. The four activities which the head nurse should do when she uses the "team" method are:
 - 1) The head nurse selects the leader of the team and the team members.
 - 2) The head nurse delegates some of her responsibilities to the team leader. This, however, does not release the head nurse from being responsible for the continuity of nursing care activities in the health unit.
 - 3) The head nurse helps the head and the members of the team to determine the patients' needs for care.
 - 4) The head nurse gives instructions and guidance to personnel and patients.

To the Learner: If you missed any of the answers to the questions, go back to the information section and study it again. When all of your answers are correct, go to section 3 on the next page.

3. Efficient Time Management in Health Units

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this information section, you will be able to:

1. state the reason why some nurses take more time and effort than other nurses to do the same job;
 2. list the six steps to be followed in order to organize and use work time efficiently;
 3. identify the activities within each step that the head nurse should perform to organize and use work time efficiently; and
 4. list seven procedures used by the head nurse to save time as well as improve her management of time.
-

Efficient time management requires administrative skills which include planning, organization and evaluation. The head nurse can increase work efficiency by good use of the time available for her and her staff. It is observed that some nurses use more time and effort than others to do the same job. The reason for that lies in how the nurse uses the time available for her to do her job.

Directions for efficient organization and utilization of work time:

To organize and utilize the time available in the health unit efficiently, the following steps should be followed:

1. Find out how the nurses utilize their time in the unit.
 - a) The head nurse lists the kind of work, the different activities, and the time each nurse consumes to do that work.
 - b) From the previous list, the head nurse can determine the wasted time as well as the activities that should be increased or decreased.
2. Make a plan for use of time.
 - a) The head nurse makes her time plan according to the work and the activities required to be done.
 - b) The head nurse distributes the nursing activities among the nurses and defines each nurse's work as well as her

responsibilities. The head nurse lists the work priorities on the basis of the importance of each activity. For example, if there are a large number of children to be vaccinated, the head nurse should assign more than one nurse to administer the vaccinations.

- c) The head nurse should determine the time required to complete the different activities. This will limit the scope of activities as well as prevent the personnel from spending their time doing unnecessary work or asking what they should be doing.
- d) The head nurse determines communication lines regarding nurses' complaints or requests for help or advice. This will save the nurses' time and effort spent in questioning and finding out answers.
- e) The head nurse puts the plan to achieve these activities in the form of tables, routine work schedules, variable work schedules, shifts schedules, program charts, and the year calendar. (Examples of these tables and their use are in Figures 3,4,5,6,7).

3. Organize the work.

- a) The head nurse puts the organizational structure of the nursing department in the form of an organization map. The map should illustrate the relationships between the nursing staff members as well as the responsibilities and authorities. (Figure 2)
- b) The head nurse explains and interprets for the nurses the job description which identifies the functions and responsibilities of each job. This will avoid the conflicts that may arise between the nurses and consume a good part of the time that should be devoted to patients' care.

4. Use and develop personnel effectively.

The presence of a qualified and trained nursing staff is a fundamental element in providing good nursing care to patients. It is also considered an important factor in efficient time management as less time and effort is required to supervise, professionally develop and correct the performance of good qualified and trained nurses.

The head nurse should be aware of the following:

- a) The continuing education and training programs increase the nurses' efficiency and help to prepare them to carry out their

duties and responsibilities, which allows for better use of time.

- b) The appropriate use and placement of nursing manpower helps to utilize the nursing time in a better manner and decreases wasted time.
- c) The coordination of the nurses' abilities and work preferences increases their job satisfaction which in turn reduces absenteeism.
- d) Personnel discipline and punctuality in observing work time should be emphasized since tardiness is a loss of time.

5. Direct the staff.

Directing is the responsibility of the head nurse towards her staff. The purpose of directing is to increase staff self confidence and appreciation of the kind of work they are doing. A successful head nurse is the nurse who can get the work done using others after training and directing them.

Effective directing of personnel helps the head nurse to conserve time. The head nurse can achieve this by:

- a) Identifying tasks that can be delegated to subordinates. The head nurse clearly explains the task to the person beforehand. This will enable the head nurse to save considerable time that she can use for other activities requiring her supervision.
- b) Encouraging effective communication between her subordinates and herself. This will enable her to discover problems once they arise and handle them immediately before they accumulate.

6. Follow up and evaluate.

The purpose of follow-up and evaluation is to evaluate the personnel performance and the nursing care provided. This is achieved by setting standards and evaluating the work outcome against these standards. This is also applied to the work plan, the objectives, the staff use of time, and the reduction of time loss on non-nursing activities.

Important points that will improve the head nurse's use of her time:

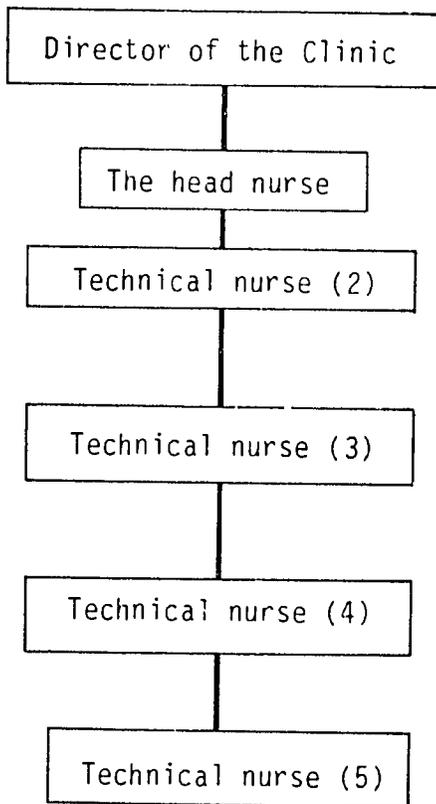
- 1. The head nurse should organize her schedule so that she can take care of the important and the most difficult tasks, that require concentration, in the morning. The simple tasks that do not require great mental effort, such as organizing papers, recording some data,

organizing instruments, closets, etc., should be taken care of in the afternoon.

2. Give a few minutes at the beginning of every day for a quick review of the day working plan. A simple list of the tasks organized according to their priorities will help the head nurse a great deal. At the end of the day, the head nurse should devote a few minutes to review and evaluate the work done on that day and to note what is left to be done on the next day.
3. Use files to organize work. Specific files should be used for the different activities, e.g., one file is to be used for important and urgent matters; another file is to be used for the important subjects that require study and a quick decision, etc.
4. Use color and labeled dividers inside the files because it is easier and faster to find information about a particular subject by using these dividers.
5. Use phone calls whenever possible since they help to quickly accomplish work and save the time spent in writing and meeting.
6. Meetings with subordinates and listening to their complaints and solving these complaints take a great part of the head nurse's time. It is better for the head nurse to visit the nurses in their locations and listen to their complaints there. In this way, the nurse does not have to leave her work in order to go to the head nurse's office to tell her about her complaints. Also, the head nurse can organize her time and go to the nurses' work areas to investigate their complaints during her rounds without disturbing the work schedule.
7. When the head nurse holds a meeting with the nursing staff, she is advised to follow the following points in order to use and organize her time effectively:
 - a) Determine the meeting purpose and the subjects to be discussed. The meeting agenda should be circulated to all the participants before the meeting.
 - b) The time and place of the meeting as well as the participants should be determined in advance. If a large group of the participants cannot attend the meeting, the meeting should be cancelled and the rest of the participants should be notified.
 - c) Subordinates can represent the head nurse if she cannot attend for some important reason.
 - d) Following the agenda according to the priorities of items is necessary in order that only less important items will be left over.

- e) The head nurse should direct the meeting and avoid interruptions. The head nurse should clearly repeat the decisions and the activities assigned to each individual, as well as mention the time limits to finish these tasks.
- f) Observing the time during the meeting is important. The meeting should start on time and finish on time.

The Structural Organization of the Nursing Department in a Health Unit
(Figure 2)



- Technical nurse (2): 5 year program or equivalent
- Technical nurse (3): specialized nurse or experienced assistant nurse or 3 year program
- Technical nurse (4): new graduate from secondary technical school of nursing
- Technical nurse (5): nurse assistants

Practice Questions

1. State the reason why some nurses take more time and effort than other nurses to do the same job.
2. List the six steps to follow in order to organize and use work time efficiently.
3. Following is a list of some of the activities which the head nurse does to help her use work time more efficiently. Write the step that corresponds with each of the activities listed. The head nurse should:
 - a. set standards of performance and for evaluation of outcome
 - b. encourage effective communication with her staff for quick discovery of the problems as soon as they occur
 - c. distribute the nursing activities among the nurses and assign the work and responsibilities for each nurse
 - d. coordinate the different abilities of the nursing staff and their work preferences
 - e. explain and interpret to the nurses the job description structure which identifies their functions
 - f. list the kind of work, the different activities, and the time each nurse consumes to do that work.
4. State briefly the most important procedures to be used by the head nurse to save time as well as to improve her method of using time.

To the Learner: Turn the page to check your answers.

Answers to Practice Questions

1. Some nurses use more time and effort than others to do the same job, because of the difference in how each nurse uses the time available to her to do the job.
2.
 - a) Find out how the nurses use their time in the health unit.
 - b) Make a plan for use of time.
 - c) Organize the work.
 - d) Use and develop personnel effectively.
 - e) Direct the staff.
 - f) Follow up and evaluate.
3.
 - a) Follow up and evaluate.
 - b) Direct the staff.
 - c) Make a plan for the use of time.
 - d) Use and develop personnel effectively.
 - e) Organize the work.
 - f) Find out how the nurses use their time in the health unit.
4.
 - 1) The head nurse must organize her schedule so that she can take care of the important and the most difficult tasks that require concentration in the morning. The simple tasks that do not require great mental effort should be taken care in the afternoon.
 - 2) Give a few minutes at the beginning of every day for a quick review of the day and work plan. A simple list of the tasks organized according to their priorities will help her a great deal. At the end of the day, the head nurse should devote a few minutes to review and evaluate the work done on that day and note what is left to be done on the next day.
 - 3) Use files to organize work. Special files should be used for the different activities.
 - 4) Use color and labeled dividers inside the files since it is easier and faster to find information about a particular subject by using these dividers.
 - 5) Use phone calls whenever possible since they help to quickly accomplish work and save the time spent in writing and meeting.
 - 6) Meeting the nurses in their locations and listening to their complaints saves time and prevents the nurses from leaving their work to go to the head nurse's office.
 - 7) When holding a meeting with the nursing staff the following should be considered:
 - a) Determine the meeting purpose and the subjects to be discussed. The meeting agenda should be circulated to all participants before the meeting.
 - b) The time and place of the meeting as well as the participants should be determined in advance. If a large group of the participants cannot attend, the meeting should be canceled and the rest of the participants should be informed.

- c) Subordinates can represent the head nurse if she cannot attend for some important reason.
- d) Following the agenda according to the priorities of items is necessary in order that only less important items will be left over.
- e) The head nurse should direct the meeting and avoid interruptions. The head nurse should clearly repeat the decisions and the activities assigned to each individual, as well as mention the time limits to finish these tasks.
- f) Observing the time during the meeting is important. The meeting should start on time and finish on time.

To the Learner: If you missed any of the answers to the questions, go back to the information section and study it again. When all of your answers are correct, go to section 4 on the next page.

4. The Use of Different Time Tables in Time Management in Health Units

Learning Objectives

At the end of this information section, you will be able to:

1. describe the different types of tables used in the health units: time tables, schedules, duty rosters, and program charts;
 2. describe each type of table used in the health unit;
 3. state the reason for using duty rosters and their application principles; and
 4. give an example of each type of table.
-

The health clinic has different activities which require organization. An efficient head nurse should make a time plan for each of these activities. She can arrange these events on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly bases according to their frequency or regularity. These time plans are put in the form of different tables as follows:

1. Time tables

Include the daily or weekly regular and recurrent events, e.g., a weekly time schedule illustrating the exact time of the week in which a certain event always occurs such as health education sessions for the mothers in health units. (Figure 3)

2. Schedules

Include irregular or variable events, e.g., various schedules illustrating the exact time for these irregular events to take place. Examples of these events are visiting a far isolated health center or supervising maintenance work in the health unit. (Figure 4)

3. Duty Rosters

Include duties planned for each member of the nursing staff in turn, e.g., shift schedules for different departments (night shifts, out-patient clinics, shifts). (Figures 5 and 6)

4. Program Charts

Include the long term planning for a group of events or activities which will occur in the future as well as the detailed planning for each

event, e.g., program plans for the special health activities (vaccination campaigns, dehydration campaigns, antismoking campaigns, new clinics construction). (Figure 7)

Weekly Time Table for the Regular Activities of a Health Unit

(Figure 3)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-10:30	cleaning inspection clinic inpatients departments rounds				
10:30-11:00	rest				
11:00-12:30	paper work	special clinic (diabetes)	paper work	mother's class	paper work
12:30-2:30	Home visits	clinical rounds for the nurses	nursing staff meeting	home visits	inspection of inventory

Preparation of a Schedule for Irregular and Variable Activities in a Primary Care Unit

(Figure 4)

These tables are required whenever variable activities take place at different periods of time or when one activity takes place at irregular times and different places.

The following table illustrates an example for the variable work that a head nurse in a primary health care unit is responsible for.

<u>Inspection of</u>	<u>Every Tuesday as shown</u>		
- Inventory of instruments	3 April	vacation	24 July
- Furniture and instruments of therapy room	10 April	5 June	31 July
- Building and surroundings	17 April	12 June	7 August
- Furniture in inpatients departments and outpatients clinics	24 April	18 June	14 August
- Delivery Room	vacation	26 June	21 August
- Car and its records	8 May	3 July	vacation
- Pharmacy	15 May	10 July	4 September
- Office and record keeping system	22 May	17 July	11 September

The previous example illustrates that every department has its own inspection schedule every 8 weeks (2 months). This will help to distribute the maintenance and inspection activities required all over the year as well as save time.

Table for Duty Rosters

The duty roster is a time plan to distribute the work load equally and in turn among nurses. Rosters are one of the most delicate matters which the head nurse has to deal with. This is because they cause arguments, conflicts and sensitivities among nurses.

Duty Rosters are used for 3 purposes:

1. Distribute extra work outside normal working hours equally among the nurses, e.g., night shifts, weekend shifts, overtime.
2. Distribute the difficult and the undesirable tasks equally between the nurses, e.g., home visits.

3. Divide the extra duties equally between personnel, e.g., supervising the educational kitchen, developing audio-visual materials and checking on cleanliness.

Table for Duty Roster

(Figure 5)

shifts	dates	wound dressing room	injection room	examination room	maternity & child care	delivery room	night duties
4-10	5-22	A,G	B,H	C	D	E	F
4-17	5-29	F	A,G	B,H	C	D	E
4-24	6-5	E	F	A,G	B,H	C	D
5-1	6-12	D	E	F	A,G	B,H	C
5-8	6-19	C	D	E	F	A,G	B,H
5-8	6-26	B,H	C	D	E	F	A,G

Principles underlying the application of the duty roster:

There are two basic principles for rotating personnel through the different duties:

1. The length of the duty periods should be equal.
2. The number of nurses on the shifts working in turn should be equal to the number of work periods or the number of activities, or divided equally by them.

The following should be considered when making a duty roster:
(Figures 5, 6)

1. The date of the 1st day of the week to be written in the left column.
2. The place and the time of the shift to be written across or vertically.
3. The names of the nurses should be written in succession from left to right and starting a new line (horizontally) with the last name in the previous column.

The following is an example of one of the problems the head nurse might encounter when she makes the duty roster.

The problem

A primary care unit has 6 activities: wound dressings room, injections room, examination room, maternal and child care clinic, delivery room and inpatients' night shifts. There are 8 nurses available. How can these 8 nurses be rotated equally among the 6 activities.

Note: Remember that the number of shift periods should be equal to the number of nurses on the shifts.

Solution #1:

Make six groups, four of them contain one nurse each and two groups contain two nurses each. Distribute the 6 groups over the 6 activities. The extra 2 nurses should be ready to assist in any of the other activities in case of extra work or emergency.

- The letters A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H represent the eight nurses.
- The shifts are distributed over 6 weeks.

Duty Roster

dates		wound dressings	injections	exam. room	maternal child care	maternal child care	delivery		night duties
4-10	6-5	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
4-17	6-12	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
4-24	6-19	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F
5-1	6-26	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E
5-8	7-3	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D
5-15	7-10	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C
5-22	7-17	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B
5-29	7-24	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A

(Figure 6)

Solution #2:

Increase the number of units to eight so that they match the number of nurses. The units that have extra work are divided into 2 units so that the number of nurses working in these units will be double the number of nurses working in the other units.

The number of nurses is eight and the nurses are represented by the letters A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H.

Preparation of Program Chart:

A program is a long term plan that determines the occurrence of a group of events in the future, e.g., vaccination campaign, setting up a family planning clinic. The program usually includes information concerning the activity that will be carried out, such as where, when, and who will carry out this activity.

The time plan is a part of the overall program. The sequence of activities in the time plan should depend on the kind of the activities, e.g., in a vaccination campaign, it might be more important to order the instruments such as syringes first. On the other hand, if new activities will be starting such as family planning, it is important to send one of the team members for training first.

How to do a program chart:

One of the most suitable and easy ways is to write the list of activities according to the sequence of their occurrence on the left side of the page. Write the months and weeks across the top of the page as in the following illustration (Figure 7).

Model for a Program Chart

Setting up a Family Planning Clinic in a Primary Health Care Unit
(Figure 7)

Activities	Suggested time for the activities											
	August				September			October				
	7	14	21	28	11	18	25	2	9	17	23	
1. Discuss the project with unit manager and personnel												
2. Select one or more nurses for training												
3. Send a nurse for two weeks training												
4. Make a list of the necessary instruments and equipment												
5. Request the necessary instruments and equipment												
6. Hold meeting with the community leaders and the users of the facility												
7. Expected date of instruments and equipment arrival												
8. Inauguration of the clinic												

Every column represents one week

Practice Questions

1. Describe the different types of tables used in the health units to organize the use of time.
2. Following are four phrases that describe different types of time tables used in the health unit to organize time. Place the name of the table in front of the corresponding phrase.
 - a. Interrupted or irregular or variable events
 - b. Long term organization of a group of activities or events that will take place in the future as well as putting the time plan for each part
 - c. Daily or weekly regular events
 - d. Planning the nursing staff duties alternately and in turn
3. State the three purposes for using duty rosters and give the principles underlying their application.
4. Give an example on each of the following tables:
 - a. Time tables
 - b. Schedules
 - c. Duty Rosters
 - d. Program Charts

To the Learner: Turn the page to check your answers.

Answers to Practice Questions

1.
 - a) Time tables include the daily or weekly regular and recurrent events.
 - b) Schedules include irregular or variable events.
 - c) Duty rosters include duties planned for each member of the nursing staff in turn.
 - d) Program charts include the long term planning for a group of events or activities which will occur in the future as well as the detailed planning for each event.

2.
 - a) Schedules
 - b) Program Charts
 - c) Time Tables
 - d) Duty Rosters

3. The three purposes for using the duty roster are:
 1. Distribute the extra work outside normal working hours equally among the nurses.
 2. Distribute the difficult and the undesirable tasks equally among the nurses.
 3. Divide the extra duties equally between personnel.

The two principles underlying the application of the duty roster are:

 1. The length of the duty periods should be equal.
 2. The number of nurses working in turn should be equal to the number of activities or work periods or divided evenly by them.

4.
 - a) A weekly time table that illustrates the exact time of the week in which a certain event always occurs such as mother health education classes.
 - b) Schedules that illustrate the exact time for irregular events to take place such as visiting a far isolated health center or maintenance work in the health unit.
 - c) Duty roster for the different departments such as night shifts, outpatient clinic shifts.
 - d) Program charts for the special health activities such as vaccination campaign, and dehydration treatment campaign.

To the Learner: If you missed any of the answers to the questions, go back to the information section and study it again. When all of your answers are correct, go to section 5 on the next page.

5. Organization of the Work Flow in Health Units

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this information section, you will be able to:

1. identify the different departments that form the health unit;
 2. state the three main elements that influence the organization of work flow in health units;
 3. state the factors that influence the standards of health units in relation to space and architectural design and explain how problems in this area can be overcome;
 4. state the advantages of organizing equipment and furniture and the disadvantages of having a disorganized health unit;
 5. identify the types of consumer services provided by the health unit; and
 6. identify the suitable solutions which help keep the work flow smooth in each of the departments that form the health unit: reception, examination room, treatment room, and pharmacy.
-

The health unit is an organization which delivers good standards of health care. In order to achieve this objective, each health unit is composed of several departments such as the reception room, the examination room, the therapy and treatment room, and the pharmacy.

Organizing the work flow in health units depends on three main factors:

1. The building
2. Equipment, instruments and furniture
3. Patients and attendants

1. The building:

Many health units do not attain the desired standards of building space, quality, efficiency and architectural design for the following reasons:

- a) Many health units operate in rented houses that are not built specially for this purpose.

- b) The increasing number of patients and staff as well as the increasing number of activities performed by the clinics cause the building to be run down when there is not proper maintenance. Doctors, head nurses and nurses of the health units have to go along with the present situation and try to study realistic solutions to overcome these obstacles.

The most important solutions are:

- a) Continuous evaluation of the necessary maintenance work required for the building. This is done by listing all the required maintenance work at the end of the fiscal year and outlining the necessary costs with the stock clerk and the director of the clinic so that the necessary budget will be allocated for this purpose.
- b) Continuous follow up of these requests through the nurse inspector who should include the progress in her monthly report.
- c) Continuous observation and inspection of the personnel responsible for cleaning and maintaining the building. Instructions should be provided to them whenever necessary.
- d) If maintenance personnel are hard to find and the clinic has to count on the medical district for providing the maintenance, the head nurse should make a monthly schedule containing the dates when each member of the maintenance team is needed.
- e) Providing continuous education and training for the nurses about maintenance and the effective ways of reporting and following up on maintenance problems.

2. Equipment, instruments, furniture:

This includes desks, chairs, closets, files, etc. When the furniture and the equipment are organized, it helps to achieve the following:

- a) The place looks more spacious.
- b) Personnel feel more comfortable and that enhances their performance and productivity.

The disadvantages of a disorganized place are:

- a) The place looks small and crowded.
- b) It influences the work environment which reduces personnel performance and decreases productivity.
- c) It increases mistakes and accidents.

3. Patients and attendants of the health unit.

There are two kinds of consumers of health clinic services:

- a) new patients: the patient who is attending the health unit for the first time. This patient is required to have a treatment card, then goes to the examination room. From the examination room the doctor might refer him to have an x-ray or lab tests or go to the therapy room for treatment and then to the pharmacy which dispenses his medication. The patient leaves.
- b) follow-up patients: the patient who previously visited the health unit and has been examined and treated. This patient comes in on certain days for follow-up according to doctors orders. He receives his medications and leaves.

Overcrowding of patients - reasons and solutions:

Congestion and lines of patients are caused by too many patients being in one place at one time. This overcrowding could occur any place where service is offered. Before studying the reasons for overcrowding, the management of the clinic should take the following steps in order to help resolve the problem:

- a) Place illustrated signs at the entrance of each department. The signs should include the department's name and a symbol indicating its activity.
- b) Have an information desk.

Places of overcrowding in the clinic:

- a) Reception: The reason for overcrowding in this area is that all the patients get their treatment cards at specific hours.

Suggestions:

- 1) Have two separate desks: one for new patients, the other for follow up patients.
- 2) Allow a limited period of time for dispensing treatment cards after which no card will be dispensed.
- 3) Assign more employees from other areas to dispense treatment cards when you have more patients and free nurses to receive patients.

b) Examination room:

Suggestions:

- 1) Examination is to be performed only with previous appointment. This method, however, is difficult to apply in rural areas.
- 2) Classify your patients by "acute" and "routine" cases. Priority is to be given to emergency cases, e.g., renal pain, puerperal sepsis, heart failure.
- 3) A trained nurse should prepare the patients before they see the physician, e.g., taking medical history, recording patients' complaints, taking vital signs.
- 4) The physicians should start seeing patients early and should not wait till the clinic becomes crowded.

c) Examination room and lab

Suggestions:

- 1) Start work early.
- 2) Prepare therapy beforehand (e.g., syringes and solutions) and sterilize syringes, needles and instruments before starting vaccination or therapy.
- 3) Superiors should supervise closely.
- 4) Assign certain days during the week for certain types of treatment.

d) Pharmacy

Suggestions:

- a) The pharmacist should start early and should not wait for patients to gather.
- b) Prepare all commonly used medications and bottle beforehand so they can be dispensed immediately to the patient.
- c) Prepare written instructions or illustrations on how to use the medications and give them to the patient.

Practice Questions

1. What are the different departments of the health unit?
2. State the three main elements that influence the organization of smooth work flow in health units.
3. State the factors that influence the standards of the health unit in relation to space and architectural design and explain how these problems can be overcome.
4. State two advantages of having properly arranged equipment and furniture.
5. Briefly define "new patient" and "follow-up" patient.
6. Following is a list of some suggested solutions to the problem of overcrowding in the different departments of the health unit. Give the department name that is suitable for each of these suggestions:
 - a) Start work early.
 - b) Place visible signs on the entrance of each department with the department name and a symbol indicating its activity.
 - c) Assign a special desk for new patients and another desk for follow-up patients.
 - d) Classify the patients into "acute" and "routine" cases with priority given to acute cases.
 - e) Prepare ahead of time those medications or solutions that are commonly used or ones that require time to prepare.
 - f) Assign certain days during the week for different types of treatment.

To the Learner: Turn the page to check your answers.

Answers to Practice Questions

1. The different departments of the health unit are the reception, the examination room, the lab, the treatment room, and the pharmacy.
2. Organization of the work flow in health units is influenced by:
 - a) The building
 - b) Equipment, instruments, furniture
 - c) Patients and attendants.
3. The factors that influence the standards of the health unit in relation to space and architectural design are:
 - a) Many health clinics operate in rented houses that are not built specifically for this purpose.
 - b) The increasing number of patients and staff as well as the increasing number of activities performed by the clinic cause the building to be run down especially if there is not proper maintenance.

The most important solutions are:

- a) Continuous evaluation of the necessary maintenance work required for the building.
 - b) Continuous follow-up of these maintenance requests through the nurse inspector.
 - c) Continuous observation and inspection of the personnel responsible for cleaning and maintaining the building.
 - d) If maintenance personnel are hard to find and the clinic has to count on the medical district for providing the maintenance, the head nurse should make a monthly schedule containing the dates when each member of the maintenance team is needed.
 - e) Providing continuous education and training for the nurses about maintenance and the effective ways of reporting and following up maintenance problems.
4. Advantages of organized place are:
 - a) The place looks more spacious
 - b) Personnel feel more comfortable and that enhances their performance and productivity.
 5. A new patient is the patient who is attending the health unit for the first time. This patient is required to have a treatment card, then goes to the examination room. From the examination room the doctor might refer him to have an x-ray or lab tests or go to the treatment room and then to the pharmacy to receive his medication.

A follow-up patient is the patient who previously visited the clinic and has been examined and treated. This patient comes in on certain

days for follow-up according to doctors orders. He receives his medications and leaves.

6. a) Examination room, treatment room, pharmacy
- b) Clinic administration
- c) Reception
- d) Examination room
- e) Pharmacy
- f) Treatment room

To the Learner: If you missed any of the answers to the questions, go back to the information section and study it again. When all of your answers are correct, you have finished the information sections of this learning module. Briefly study the sections again. Then take the Post-test on the next page.

Post-Test

To the Learner: This test will tell you how much you have learned from this self-instructional module. After taking the test, check your answers on the page following the test. Be sure to use a separate sheet of paper for recording your answers.

1. State how the head nurse can effectively divide the working hours and distribute the nursing activities among the nursing staff.
2. List nine factors that the head nurse should consider when she distributes the work assignments.
3. What information concerning the nature of the work should the head nurse be aware of before distributing the work assignments?
4. What are the considerations concerning individual differences in skills and abilities that the head nurse should keep in mind when she distributes the work assignments?
5. List the three main methods of work assignments for nurses.
6. Give an example of how each method of work assignment can be applied in different work situations.
7. Following is a list of some of the advantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method that corresponds with each advantage listed:
 - a. The work is done faster and smoother by using this method.
 - b. This method helps to develop a caring and understanding relationship between the nurse and the patient. It also permits a personal satisfaction for both.
 - c. This method allows the most efficient use of personnel skills and abilities.
 - d. This method allows for anticipating and facing different work situations.
 - e. The least amount of equipment and instruments are used to perform nursing activities in this method.
 - f. Use of this method helps the nurse gain the patient's confidence, cooperation, and compliance in following treatments.
8. Following is a list of some disadvantages of the three work assignment methods. Write the method of work assignment that corresponds to each of the disadvantages listed:

- a. Incomplete delivery of comprehensive nursing care to the patients due to fragmenting the patient's nursing care among the nursing staff.
 - b. Diffusion of responsibility.
 - c. Does not provide opportunities to deliver health teaching to the patient.
 - d. Poor utilization of all the different nursing skills available in the health unit.
 - e. Takes longer to finish the work load.
 - f. This method is considered expensive because it relies only on highly qualified nurses.
9. List four activities which the head nurse should do when the team method is used.
 10. State the reason why some nurses take more time and effort than other nurses to do the same job.
 11. List the six steps to follow in order to organize and use work time efficiently.
 12. Following is a list of some of the activities which the head nurse does to help her use work time more efficiently. Write the step that corresponds with each of the activities listed. The head nurse should:
 - a. Set standards of performance and for evaluation of outcome.
 - b. Encourage effective communication with her staff for quick discovery of problems as soon as they occur.
 - c. Distribute the nursing activities among the nurses and assign the work and responsibilities for each nurse.
 - d. Coordinate the different abilities of the nursing staff and their work preferences.
 - e. Explain and interpret to the nurses the job description structure which identifies their functions.
 - f. List the kind of work, the different activities, and the time each nurse uses to do that work.
 13. State briefly the most important procedures to be used by the head nurse to save time as well as to improve her method for using time.
 14. Describe the different types of tables used in the health units to organize the use of time.
 15. Following are four phrases that describe different types of time tables used in the health unit to organize time. Put the name of the table in front of the corresponding phrase.
 - a. Interrupted or irregular or variable events
 - b. Long term organization of a group of activities or events that will take place in the future as well as putting the time plan

- for each part
 - c. Daily or weekly regular events
 - d. Planning the nursing staff duties alternately and in turn
16. State the three purposes for using duty rosters and give the principles underlying their application.
 17. Give an example of each of the following tables:
 - a. time tables
 - b. schedules
 - c. duty rosters
 - d. program charts
 18. What are the different departments of the health unit.
 19. State the three elements that influence the organization of smooth work flow in health units.
 20. State the factors that influence the standards of the health unit in relation to space and architectural design and how these problems can be overcome.
 21. State two advantages of having properly arranged equipment and furniture.
 22. Briefly define "new" patient and "follow-up" patient.
 23. Following is a list of some suggested solutions to the problem of overcrowding in the different departments in the health unit. Give the department name that is suitable for each of these suggestions.
 - a. Start work early.
 - b. Place visible signs on the entrance of each department with the department name and a symbol indicating its activity.
 - c. Assign a special desk for new patients and another desk for the follow-up patients.
 - d. Classify the patients into "acute" and "routine" cases with priority given to acute cases.
 - e. Prepare ahead of time those medications or solutions that are commonly used or ones that require time to prepare.
 - f. Assign specific days during week for different types of treatment.

Answers to Test

1. The head nurse can effectively divide the working hours and distribute the nursing activities among the nursing staff by being completely familiar with the following:
 - a. different methods of work assignment
 - b. the factors that she should consider before distributing the work assignments
 - c. selecting the suitable methods of work assignments in her unit
2. The nine factors which the head nurse should consider before distributing the work assignments among nursing staff are:
 - 1) Complete familiarization and knowledge of the nature of the work.
 - 2) Consideration of individual variations in skills and abilities among personnel
 - 3) Developing the suitable plans for staff development
 - 4) Clear identification of responsibilities and avoidance of overlapping of responsibilities
 - 5) Arranging and organizing the different parts of the written working plan
 - 6) Making sure that every member of the nursing staff knows the duties assigned to her/him
 - 7) Expecting emergencies and always being ready for them
 - 8) Observing and evaluating personnel performance
 - 9) Asking for volunteers whenever there is extra work to be done
3. The head nurse should be aware of the following information:
 - 1) the type of nursing care required by the patients in the health units and the correct method for delivering this nursing care
 - 2) the different types of procedures and activities done in the health unit
 - 3) the equipment, supplies, information and resources needed and how to obtain them
 - 4) the successful methods of communicating with personnel and superiors
 - 5) how to maintain good human relations at work
 - 6) The policies and regulations concerning vacations, rest periods, shifts, and night duty
4. The considerations are:
 - 1) The nurse's educational qualifications
 - 2) Previous working experiences in the field of practice
 - 3) Personal skills and professional abilities
 - 4) The nurse's preference and attitude towards work

- d) Use and develop personnel effectively.
 - e) Direct the staff.
 - f) Follow up and evaluate.
- 12.
- a) Follow up and evaluate.
 - b) Direct the staff.
 - c) Make a plan for the use of time.
 - d) Use and develop personnel effectively.
 - e) Organize the work.
 - f) Find out how the nurses use their time in the health unit.
- 13.
- 1) The head nurse must organize her schedule so that she can take care of the important and the most difficult tasks that require concentration in the morning. The simple tasks that do not require great mental effort should be taken care in the afternoon.
 - 2) Give a few minutes at the beginning of every day for a quick review of the day and work plan. A simple list of the tasks organized according to their priorities will help her a great deal. At the end of the day, the head nurse should devote a few minutes to review and evaluate the work done on that day and note what is left to be done on the next day.
 - 3) Use files to organize work. Special files should be used for the different activities.
 - 4) Use color and labeled dividers inside the files since it is easier and faster to find information about a particular subject by using these dividers.
 - 5) Use phone calls whenever possible since they help to quickly accomplish work and save the time spent in writing and meeting.
 - 6) Meeting the nurses in their locations and listening to their complaints saves time and prevents the nurses from leaving their work to go to the head nurse's office.
 - 7) When holding a meeting with the nursing staff the following should be considered:
 - a) Determine the meeting purpose and the subjects to be discussed. The meeting agenda should be circulated to all participants before the meeting.
 - b) The time and place of the meeting as well as the participants should be determined in advance. If a large group of the participants cannot attend, the meeting should be canceled and the rest of the participants should be informed.
 - c) Subordinates can represent the head nurse if she cannot attend for some important reason.
 - d) Following the agenda according to the priorities of items is necessary in order that only less important items will be left over.
 - e) The head nurse should direct the meeting and avoid interruptions. The head nurse should clearly repeat the decisions and the activities assigned to each individual, as well as mention the time limits to finish these tasks.
 - f) Observing the time during the meeting is important. The meeting should start on time and finish on time.

14. a) Time tables include the daily or weekly regular and recurrent events.
 b) Schedules include irregular or variable events.
 c) Duty rosters include duties planned for each member of the nursing staff in turn.
 d) Program charts include the long term planning for a group of events or activities which will occur in the future as well as the detailed planning for each event.
15. a) Schedules
 b) Program Charts
 c) Time Tables
 d) Duty Rosters
16. The three purposes for using the duty roster are:
 1. Distribute the extra work outside normal working hours equally among the nurses.
 2. Distribute the difficult and the undesirable tasks equally among the nurses.
 3. Divide the extra duties equally between personnel.
- The two principles underlying the application of the duty roster are:
 1. The length of the duty periods should be equal.
 2. The number of nurses working in turn should be equal to the number of activities or work periods or divided evenly by them.
17. a) A weekly time table that illustrates the exact time of the week in which a certain event always occurs such as mother health education classes.
 b) Schedules that illustrate the exact time for irregular events to take place such as visiting a far isolated health center or maintenance work in the health unit.
 c) Duty roster for the different departments such as night shifts, outpatient clinic shifts.
 d) Program charts for the special health activities such as vaccination campaign, and dehydration treatment campaign.
18. The different departments of the health unit are the reception, the examination room, the lab, the therapy room, and the pharmacy.
19. Organization of the work flow in health units is influenced by:
 a) The building
 b) Equipment, instruments, furniture
 c) Patients and attendants.
20. The factors that influence the standards of the health unit in relation to space and architectural design are:
 a) Many health clinics operate in rented houses that are not built specifically for this purpose.

- b) The increasing number of patients and staff as well as the increasing number of activities performed by the clinic cause the building to be run down especially if there is not proper maintenance.

The most important solutions are:

- a) Continuous evaluation of the necessary maintenance work required for the building.
- b) Continuous follow-up of these maintenance requests through the nurse inspector.
- c) Continuous observation and inspection of the personnel responsible for cleaning and maintaining the building.
- d) If maintenance personnel are hard to find and the clinic has to count on the medical district for providing the maintenance, the head nurse should make a monthly schedule containing the dates when each member of the maintenance team is needed.
- e) Providing continuous education and training for the nurses about maintenance and the effective ways of reporting and following up maintenance problems.

21. Advantages of organized place are:

- a) The place looks more spacious
- b) Personnel feel more comfortable and that enhances their performance and productivity.

22. A new patient is the patient who is attending the health unit for the first time. This patient is required to have a treatment card, then goes to the examination room. From the examination room the doctor might refer him to have an x-ray or lab tests or go to the treatment room and then to the pharmacy to receive his medication.

A follow-up patient is the patient who previously visited the clinic and has been examined and treated. This patient comes in on certain days for follow-up according to doctors orders. He receives his medications and leaves.

23. a) Examination room, treatment room, pharmacy
b) Clinic administration
c) Reception
d) Examination room
e) Pharmacy
f) Treatment room