



Male Nurse Diary

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Getting Professional with Human Touch

After graduation from junior high school, I took the advice of my class counselor and entered the 5-year nursing school in Tzu Chi University of Science & Technology, and then 2-year junior college. It took me seven years of preparation, followed by a one year military service in Taiwan to become a clinical nurse. Since I am a Tzu Chi financed student, my career started with an assignment as a nurse in the Medical ICU at the Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital. Before I started my first job, I was a little scared and asked myself, "Why am I so unlucky to be assigned to such a department?" Then, I said to myself, "This is such a strange land for me. The patients there are all critically ill. I have not been prepared to serve them, not when I was in school, not when I was in the military. My year in the military was basically in the kitchen - cooking. This first real job would be very miserable..."

As expected, in the first three months of the probationary period I was in deep trouble. Adjusting to the work environment, rules and regulations, confronting with the critical conditions of the



patients and the side effects of the medicines, handling of the equipment, etc., all pushed me to the verge of a break down. Fortunately, a very kind and patient mentor was assigned to help me. Under her supervision, she would urge me to speed-up, but not to violate the principle to do things right and safe.

I remember that there was a time because of some problem during a shift change and the filthy condition of the patient, my mentor took all the blames on me. I overheard a senior nurse yelling at her by saying, “Can’t do this, can’t do that, can’t even smoothly switch shift.” Ever since that episode, I constantly remind myself to be a responsible professional, never again let others assign the blame after a mistake.

During my off-hours, I routinely discuss clinical problems and record keeping details with my mentor. She would enthusiastically offer her encouragement whenever I make some small progress. Under her direction, I finally finish my one year internship. During that time, I mastered most of the general rules working in MICU. However, I still need to enrich my ability to face the unpredictable situations in the unit. Quite often, senior nurses would notice my negligence during the shift change. I appreciated their advice,





however, occasionally that made my heartbeats faster and my breathing shorter. I tried very hard to absorb the experience from the senior staff. My philosophy is, "Failure itself is not the key, but the courage to admit it and to face it will point me to the right direction."

Most of the patients in the ICU are in coma, or with endotracheal tubes. At times, I would get loss by routinely dealing with them and think it is just a job. I would tell myself that they are just patients with no interactions. But when I walk into the visitors waiting room, I heard the doctors explain the situation to the patient's family members and friends, I realized that the patients all have feelings and with warm human bodies. Gradually, my passion to the nursing profession increased. As my heart warmed, it warms up the patients and their family, and their friends. This type of human touch is getting into my professional growth.