

Nursing Professionals and Practitioners Are Best Allies

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A Registered Nurse (RN) is like a teacher and a friend during the training and transitional period of a doctor, at least that is my experience as a practitioner and a doctor.

Registered Nurses with their own unique roles, travel back and forth between corners of the hospital. Besides patients' evaluation, reporting, or executing doctors' diagnosis, they play vital roles to support a medical team. They also assist and care for medical students, resident doctors, and current doctors alike.

I was fortunate to collaborate with many senior nurses when I first started, learning and interacting with patients during my shifts. I learned valuable lessons through their reporting on hypouricemia,



dyspnea, and bloody stools from gastro-intestinal bleeding, drop or rise in blood pressure and changes in the mental state. They gave me information for accurate diagnosis and decision-making. During such time, I greatly admired those nurses.

Nurses became members of the diagnostic team when I was intern and later resident doctor. I finally have partners I can trust, colleagues I can collaborate and debate. They bring with them psychological evaluation of patients and their relatives, which is critical but very difficult for doctors to assemble and understand. Sometimes, relatives only visit during night shifts and on the weekends. They can quickly identify relatives with whom we need to communicate. What I enjoy even more is the exchange they have with elderly patients assisting them to the bathroom, turning the patients whenever necessary, feeding and changing dressings. They show me their affection and loving care for patients. They humble my everyday working experience, something that cannot be described easily in a few words.

It is not always upbeat in the medical environment. Tears of the nurses can still be found. It may be from the passing of some long-term patients, or the impolite treatment from patients and families, or the feeling of remorsefulness for some careless mistakes, or the sense of hopelessness for terminally ill patients. Nurses may become homesick while working with suffering patients and some feel guilty for not able to provide the same for their families. When they become ill, they worry about their colleagues (workload), and the patients (care). There are too many stories, responsibilities, and sadness...

Nevertheless, thanks to the comfort and help of everyone within the team, we can also see the warm side of every nurse and colleagues.

Because of the promotion of evidence-based medicine in recent years, nurses also work diligently in areas such as reading and researching medical journals to advance their knowledge. They study for continued education and publish research papers. During discussion, I was impressed with their proactive thinking and mindfulness to advance their new knowledge in their respective fields; their levels are equivalent to that of other medical personnel. In the past when nurses have yet to be identified, we always use the generic name "Nurses" to call our partners. However, after three years of change, we now use a formal name "Reregistered Nurses" to address our partners, which truly represents the professionalism of the nursing profession, at least, that is how I feel.

We also are in close contact with other nurses who are specialists, such as wound management, parenteral nutrition, hospice care, home care and specialty nursing. This allows a full spectrum of services to better transition patients from wounds management to nutritional recovery, home care, or even hospice care. Two years ago, I was a patient in maternity ward, the smiling faces and warm greetings from the nurses had such a soothing effect that it made all the fears and discomfort disappear.

These white-dressed angels carrying the lights in darkness are my best allies in the medical field and they are more relied on by patients than doctors. While their work is tough, they continue to spread the seeds of love and kindness. We all wish the same: May all the patients healed from sufferings and in peace.