

BOOK REVIEWS

The Practice Nurse (2nd Edition)
Pauline Jeffree
London: Chapman and Hall 1995
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In "The Practice Nurse" Pauline Jeffree builds upon the success of her previous work of the same title, extensively revising the text to cover such aspects as the latest Health and Safety at Work regulations, and the relevance of the various health care "reforms", not least the new GP Contract of 1990, to clinical practice.

The text is split into two sections: "Clinical Care and General Practice", and "Lifestyle and Health". The former considers the fundamental bases of nursing care, such as ethics and the UKCC Code of Conduct, the Data Protection Act, Health and Safety at Work Act, infection control procedures, the Children Act, etc. As the section heading implies, here Jeffree gives an overview of the more "hands on" aspects of nursing in general practice, where some form of direct physical treatment is required such as wound management, immunisation, and the ordering and interpretation of laboratory tests. The only criticism here is that the section jumps around a little between theory and practice, and it would perhaps have been wiser to include a third section to the book, preceding the others, dealing particularly with the ethical issues and underpinning legislation. Nevertheless, this section gives a good grounding to the work of any practice nurse.

Section two of the book, "Lifestyle and Health", concentrates particularly on the health promotion side of the practice nurse role, covering the work required by the GP Contract of 1990, and the health promotion "banding

system". Jeffree looks specifically at the management of diabetes and asthma, coronary heart disease, travel health, the well woman, and well man. It is refreshing to see though, that she does not simply cover what the practice nurse needs to know to survive in the system. For example, the description of the ageing process and the general care of the elderly, including abuse and Alzheimer's disease, goes beyond the simplistic "check and tick" approach to over 75 assessment as required by the DoH and is a welcome change from the "how to do practice nursing" approach we so often use.

In "The Practice Nurse", Pauline Jeffree has given a thorough account of the role. Reading the contents page alone gives one an understanding of the complexity of this still growing field of community nursing, and this book would be useful on the shelf of any practice nurse. The nurse who is new to general practice would benefit in particular, in that Jeffree has managed to include all the essential aspects of this work, however she recognises that more in depth reading is necessary to do the job properly and gives good references for background reading and addresses for further advice and information.

"The Practice Nurse" is not the only book practice nurses will require - those with experience should know a good deal of its content anyway - what it does provide though is a most comprehensive reference point and aide memoir which should be welcomed by all.

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The Psychology of Nursing Care

Neil Niven with Jill Robinson

London: British Psychological Society & MacMillan Press.
1994

This is a much needed book which provides further insights into another dimension of nursing care. The psychological dimension is one which is often misunderstood. For that reason it may be overlooked and its impacts underestimated. As such, the adoption and integration of its enormous potential effectively into the provision of nursing care may not have been fully realised.

The authors have made an excellent attempt at articulating the subject in an easy style. It is manifested by the way in which the various theories and principles of psychology have been integrated into the existing nursing framework. The emphasis on the inter-personal perspectives of nursing care is to be commended. It places recognition on the fact that one of the fundamental tenets of nursing practice is that of an interactive occupation. Such human aspects are indeed the primary aspects of nursing care.

Essentially, a broad-brush approach has been adopted to deal with applied nursing issues where psychology has an important function. The relevance of psychology and its applications to nursing practice have been indicated in very simple and succinct terms. Several realistic and practical ideas have been included. They illustrate the importance of psychology as an applied science which serves to preserve the primary role of nursing. More importantly, psychology as a discipline, has been demonstrated as being vital for enriching the process of providing nursing care.

The refreshing and easily understood style may well serve to whet the appetite of readers into exploring theories in greater detail from various sources. In that respect the authors have provided a great help by the suggestions for further reading with brief reasons for their inclusion at the end of each chapter.

Each chapter also contains exercises and questions which are thought-provoking. They may be useful to students by helping them to consolidate their thoughts and understanding of the subject in appropriate contexts. Teachers of the subject may well find many of them to be very appropriate for integration into their teaching sessions. Indeed, they may contribute to stimulating the learning process and enhancing understanding.

The book provides an excellent basis for students of nursing to obtain a broad and well-founded introduction to the applications of psychology in nursing care. It could be usefully recommended for inclusion as one of the texts in the essential reading list for students on diploma and degree level courses. The book also complements the others in the BPS series for Psychology Applied to Nursing.

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