Nursing

IN·DORSET

THE DORSET SCHOOL OF NURSING

NURSING IN DORSET has been produced by the Dorset School of Nursing for people interested in training to become nurses. We hope you will find it helpful in answering most of the questions you may have, and that it will help you choose a career in nursing.

All applicants for initial basic nurse training should apply through the Nurses' Central Clearing House (NCCH). This organisation handles all applications throughout England, and will note your choice of School of Nursing shown in your application form.

We hope that you choose the Dorset School of Nursing.

The addresses of the Dorset School of Nursing, the Nurses' Central Clearing House and many others are at the back of this booklet.

BEING A NURSE

You are considering applying for training to become a nurse.

Why?

Like the 56,000 registered nurses in the United Kingdom you can give several good reasons why you want to be a nurse, but probably your main reason is that you care about people and want to do something to help those less fortunate than yourself.

You are quite right to feel this, because without your personal commitment and motivation, nursing could be 'just another job'.

It's far from that!

Nursing as a profession was established through the pioneering work of Florence Nightingale over a hundred years ago, at a time when the drugs and the treatments we all take for granted these days were few and far between.

NURSING TODAY

Today, medical and nursing science has developed so that patients' chances of survival and recovery from major illnesses are much higher, conditions in our hospitals are far safer, people with physical and mental handicaps and those with mental illnesses are cared for at home wherever possible, and the growing number of elderly people live longer and fuller lives.

Times have changed and, every year, there are more advances in health care and in health education. There has never been a more interesting and exciting time to think of becoming a nurse.

BEING A NURSE

Society has changed too. Planned families have led to parents' greater concern for the health and welfare of their children – yet there are still many children who are abused and deprived.

As adults we eat healthier food, and we have educational and vocational opportunities more diverse than ever before – yet, as a society, we face major health problems related to stress, cigarette smoking, alcohol and drug abuse.

Opportunities for elderly people to live a full life during retirement are growing. Many of their health problems can be conquered, and dignity and independence are regarded as prerequisites in care, yet in our society families live apart and elderly people are often lonely and depressed.

So much has been achieved, yet so much more has to be done.

Never has nursing been so demanding, so fulfilling and so full of opportunities.

As you make this important career decision, you should consider the responsibilities, the knowledge and experience that you must acquire, the necessity to work as part of a team and the self-discipline you must develop in order to become a member of the nursing profession.

If you can meet these demands and can still put the patient first – because you care about people – then nursing is for you.

WORKING AND LIVING IN DORSET

Being a nurse in Dorset means that you will be living and working in one of the loveliest and yet fast-growing and sophisticated parts of the country.

Dorset is a county of 617,000 people. From Lyme Regis, in the West, to Christchurch on the Hampshire border, Dorset's coastline with its high chalk headlands stretches for over 100 miles. So living in Dorset means that opportunities for water sports will be many – sailing and wind-surfing in Poole Harbour, scuba-diving around Lulworth Cove and swimming from the golden sands of Bournemouth or Weymouth are just some of the leisure activities.

Dorset is a county of friendly market towns and villages, valleys, hills and spectacular views over the English Channel and inland over the Southern Counties. For these reasons it has become a major holiday centre for people from all over the United Kingdom. For people fortunate enough to live in this beautiful county, walking, hang-gliding and all kinds of outdoor activities are on the doorstep.

As well as being beautiful, Dorset is also busy. Bournemouth and Poole, with excellent road and rail communications between London and the South-East, are now among England's major growth areas. This means that, as well as the towns being important commercial centres, there are plentiful housing, educational and shopping facilities, as well as top-class entertainment, sports and leisure activities.

With Bournemouth's International Conference Centre, and Poole and Weymouth's busy ferry links with France and the Channel Isles, Dorset has a cosmopolitan flavour, so eating out can be fun.

Dorset is able to offer individuals and families a quality of life that is unsurpassed anywhere else in the United Kingdom.

For the professional nurse, Dorset offers a quality of life at work which also is unsurpassed. It has long been renowned for the excellence of its developing health services and is fortunate to have two major new acute hospital developments in the county. In all units – mental health, mental handicap, elderly services and in the community and acute services – Dorset's reputation is high. It's a good place to live and work.

QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITIES...

Training to become a qualified nurse is demanding. You will be trained to a standard of competence and confidence in yourself as a nurse, to ensure that you can be held accountable in all aspects of planning and providing patient care once you are qualified.

The United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (UKCC) is the statutory body responsible for these three professions, and the names of all qualified nurses are placed on their professional register. In future, all nurses will be required to register with the UKCC every 3 years in order to remain eligible to practise. The UKCC is responsible not only for maintaining standards in the profession but for planning for the future. A major report called 'Project 2000' produced by the UKCC, has made recommendations for improving the quality of nurse education and enhancing the status of nurses.

The English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (ENB) is responsible for approving the training courses which all nurses must undertake to achieve the qualifications they require to practise.

In order to qualify as a professional nurse, much learning and a great deal of practical experience is necessary. The Dorset School of Nursing provides comprehensive courses for student and pupil nurses and, during the training period, supports the learners as individuals by giving guidance both professionally and personally.

BASIC NURSE TRAINING

Courses for Registered General Nurses (RGN), Registered Mental Nurses (RMN) and Registered Nurses for the Mentally Handicapped (RNMH) run for three years and nine weeks.

All pupils and students must be aged between 17½ and 45 years at the commencement of training and be in good health. A medical interview/examination will be necessary before a contract for training is offered.

Entrance requirements for Registered Nurse Training are 5 subjects at GCE 'O' level (or GCSE) Grades A, B or C, or CSE Grade 1. Of these subjects, English Language is essential and at least one science subject is preferred.
'A' level subjects are a great advantage especially for nurses seeking further qualifications and career opportunities after basic nurse training.

...REQUIRED FOR A NURSE

Some applicants may not have all the necessary qualifications, and yet still wish to become nurses. The Dorset School of Nursing at the discretion of the Director of Nurse Education, may offer a test to such applicants so that their request may be considered.

Selection of all applicants is based on an assessment of the application form and reference, and an interview which is offered to short-listed candidates. On the day of this interview, candidates will be given details of the course and will be able to visit a clinical area in one of the hospitals.

If accepted to basic nurse training, all students will be given a contract of employment with either the East or West Dorset Health Authorities.

PART-TIME RGN TRAINING

The qualities which mature men and women can bring to nursing are recognised. A course is now offered for such people to fit in with school terms, so that family commitments can be continued during nurse training.

The course, which runs for 3 years and 8 months, requires exactly the same qualifications as for the full-time RGN Training, of 5 GCE 'O' levels or the equivalent.

ENROLLED NURSE TRAINING

The Dorset School of Nursing at present offers general and psychiatric pupil nurse training, although changes nationally are anticipated in the future.

Candidates wishing to apply for these courses which run for 2 years and 6 weeks must have passes in 2 GCE 'O' level subjects, at Grades A, B or C, or the equivalent.

In addition to these courses for pupil nurses, there are EN(G) to RGN conversion courses lasting 59 weeks.

THE DORSET SCHOOL OF NURSING AND ...

The Dorset School of Nursing has evolved over the last twenty years from several separate training schools all over Dorset into one single school.

The main school and the administrative headquarters is on the Poole General Hospital site, in the centre of Poole. However there are other teaching centres in Dorchester, Bournemouth and at Herrison Hospital.

Your courses will contain both theoretical and practical work. The theoretical work, which includes the introduction to the courses, will mainly take place in the School itself. Your practical work will be in Dorset's hospitals and in the community.

CHOOSING WHERE YOU WANT TO TRAIN

When we accept a general learner nurse for registered nurse training he or she will be able to choose one of three centres, or 'circuits' as nurses call them, at which to base themselves during their training. For enrolled nurse training there are two circuits to choose from.

The circuits are based in Poole, in Bournemouth and in Dorchester, although enrolled nurse training is not offered in Dorchester. Each place has a teaching centre and all are part of the Dorset School of Nursing.

Although based at one teaching centre in Dorset, in order to gain the required experiences during the course, learner nurses will be allocated to other hospitals and to the community.

Practical experience will include training in medicine, surgery, theatre, trauma, paediatrics and geriatrics.

The psychiatric nursing courses are based at either Herrison Hospital, near Dorchester or the Herbert Day Hospital in Bournemouth. The courses in Mental Handicap nursing are based at Herrison Hospital.

Practical experience will be obtained in hospitals, hostels and homes in the community for the different client groups.

...THE PLACES WHERE YOU WILL LEARN

TAKING THE LEAD IN TEACHING

The Dorset School of Nursing is at the forefront of innovative teaching methods. In West Dorset the school is running one of six national pilot schemes for the English National Board for learners on the RGN course. This course puts greater emphasis on theoretical learning during the first year, with three academic terms. The second and third years are spent consolidating the theory through clinical practice.

THE PEOPLE WHO WILL TEACH YOU

The Director of Nurse Education is responsible for all staff, all learners and all courses run by the Dorset School of Nursing. His office is in the School at Poole General Hospital.

All teaching staff responsible for training are qualified teachers as well as registered nurses. All learners are allocated one of these nurse teachers as their personal tutor who will provide guidance and support throughout the course. As well as providing theoretical programmes they will follow the progress of learners in the clinical areas.

There are modern classrooms in the teaching centres, equipped with audio-visual facilities and other learning aids. There are library services of a comprehensive nature, for use by all disciplines working in the NHS, both learners and qualified staff.

SUPPORT DURING TRAINING

Many learners already live in Dorset and wish to continue to live at home during their training. For those learners who do not live locally, the Dorset School of Nursing is normally able to offer single residential accommodation throughout the duration of the training period close to the chosen centre of learning.

During training you will receive a training allowance, paid to you by the Health Authority that holds the contract with you. Details of this allowance will be discussed with you prior to commencement of your course.

When working in clinical areas, your duty hours, if you are working full-time will be 37½ hours per week, arranged in shifts according to the needs of the ward team.

You will be issued with uniform at the start of your course and will be expected to wear this at all times, unless specified by your tutor. Nurses have the reputation of always being smartly dressed and we hope that you will respect your uniform and always look a credit to the profession.

Indeed, your conduct as a nurse at all times must be above reproach. There is a Nursing Code of Ethics which will be explained to you in the introduction to your course.

THE FUTURE FOR NURSING

Dear Applicant,

Once you have made the decision that you want to become a nurse, you will have to think about choosing which course you would like to take. In this booklet we have told you about the qualifications necessary for basic nurse training for Registered General Nurses, for Registered Mental Nurses and for Registered Nurses for the Mentally Handicapped. We are very pleased to be able to offer the Part-time RGN courses too. We have also told you about Enrolled Nurse Training and about EN (G) to RGN conversion courses.

The role and status of nurses is changing and developing. The UKCC's 'Project 2000' has looked at the future of nursing and recognises that major changes will have to take place. The role of the Enrolled Nurse is one area which is constantly under review, for instance. There may be changes after the publication of this booklet, which reflect national or local policy for nursing. This information will be provided in supplementary literature to accompany the booklet.

The Dorset School of Nursing, in addition to basic nurse training, also provides further training for qualified nurses. Indeed, keeping our qualified nurses trained to a high standard is part of our responsibility. We run ENB courses in operating theatre nursing, care of the elderly, care of the dying, developments in nursing care, the promotion of continence and management of incontinence, teaching and assessing in clinical practice and a course on care and management of persons with AIDS.

Courses in Midwifery and District Nurse Training are also offered in Dorset. A Diploma course in Professional Studies in Nursing is offered at the Dorset Institute of Higher Education, a college which also assists in some of our courses for nurses in Basic training. A part-time BSc (Hons) course in Nursing Studies is also offered at the Institute.

Those qualified nurses wishing for further information about Post-Basic Nursing Training should contact our Applications Officer at the School.

Every year 200 newly qualified nurses attend a ceremony when they are given their badge – a symbol of their qualification. These Registered and Enrolled Nurses are then ready, after their comprehensive training with us at the Dorset School of Nursing, to start a career which will have its share of hard work and heartbreak but will, above everything else, allow them to care for others competently and confidently.

In my personal experience, nursing is the most rewarding of professions, and I hope that, if you have the right qualifications and qualities, you will be proud to join us.

Yours sincerely,

Director of
Nurse Education

HOW TO MAKE YOUR APPLICATION TO BECOME A NURSE.

All applications for basic nurse training are made through the Nurses Central Clearing House and a form for obtaining an Application Package is included with this booklet. Provided you are over 16½ years and meet the entrance requirements of the course you should send this form to the NCCH whose address is given on the form and inside the back cover of this booklet.

Application for Post-Registration and Post-Enrolled courses should be sent directly to the Applications Officer at the Dorset School of Nursing, Poole General Hospital.

Names and addresses:

Nurses' Central Clearing House
(NCCH)
P.O. Box 346
Bristol BS99 7FB

Dorset School of Nursing
Poole General Hospital
Longfleet Road
Poole
Dorset BH15 2JB

Tel: Poole (0202) 675100

Dorset School of Nursing
Dorset County Hospital
Princes Street
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1TS

Tel: Dorchester (0305) 63123

Dorset School of Nursing
Royal Victoria Hospital
Shelley Road
Boscombe
Bournemouth BH7 6JE

Tel: Bournemouth (0202) 35201

Dorset School of Nursing
Education Centre
Herrison Hospital
Dorchester
Dorset DT2 9RL

Tel: Dorchester (0305) 63661

English National Board for Nursing
Midwifery and Health Visiting
Victory House
170 Tottenham Court Road
London W1P 0HA

Tel: 01 388 3131

Dorset Institute of Higher Education
Wallisdown Road
Poole
Dorset BH12 5BB

Tel: Bournemouth (0202) 524111

Map of Poole General Hospital, Royal Victoria and Dorset County Hospital, Herrison Hospital, Herbert Day Hospital, Weymouth and District Hospital and Christchurch Hospital to show location of schools.

Produced by Line-up in association with Baseline Creative, Bath.