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1. What does a Nurse do?

There are four branches of nursing that you can choose to specialise in:
- Adult
- Children’s
- Mental Health
- Learning Disabilities

Midwifery is a separate career.

Adult Nursing—Many people come into this area of nursing expecting to learn practical skills and procedures. You will learn these and much more! The mark of a professional is the ability to assess situations and modify care accordingly.

As a nurse in the adult branch you will be working at the centre of a multi professional team that includes doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, pharmacists and many more. You will have close contact with patients and their families. As part of your training you will learn how to assess, plan, implement and evaluate care for individual patients. You can be hospital based or work in the community.

Children’s Nursing—This branch involves everything from nursing a sick newborn to an adolescent road accident victim. The challenges are varied, with family care and support a key element. Nursing a child is not just a question of caring for a miniature adult. You have to understand how a healthy child develops towards adulthood and know how to minimise the impact of illness or hospital admission on the child. This involves working in partnership with the parents, or whoever looks after the child at home.

Another factor which complicates treatment of the younger child is that of communication. While adults can express what they feel and need or identify the severity and nature of pain a child may not be able to communicate in such detail and the nurse needs to interpret behaviour and reactions intelligently.

Mental Health Nursing—is one of the most complex and demanding areas of nursing. As many as one in three people are thought to suffer some form of mental health problem. For many, mental illness is brought on by a crisis in life, which they cannot cope with, such as depression after the death of a partner.

The range of conditions is vast: neuroses, psychoses, psychological and personality disorders all come under the broad heading of mental health. The key role and challenge is to form therapeutic relationships with mentally ill people and their families. Most mentally ill people are not cared for in hospital but in the community.

You might be based in a community mental health team. You will need to have a good understanding of the theories of mental health and illness.

Learning Disabilities Nursing—Does not come under the umbrella of the GHA, but we are willing to give students advice and information on Learning Disabilities Nursing and access to training.

Nursing Assistants—Can work within hospital or primary care settings under the guidance of a qualified healthcare professional. The role can be very varied depending upon the area which the person is employed. Nursing Assistants may work alongside nurses and qualified midwives in maternity services.

The types of duties include:
- Washing and Dressing
- Feeding
- Helping people to mobilise
- Toiletting
- Bed Making
- Generally assisting with patients overall comfort
- Monitoring patients conditions

2. Entry requirements:

The minimum academic entry requirements for Nursing Assistants are 2 passes at GCSE (one of which must be English Language) and be 17 years of age or over. Applicants not in possession of the minimum academic requirements will be required to undertake a written examination. All applicants will also be required to successfully complete an induction programme and an interview.

Entry requirements for the various branches of nursing may be obtained from the School of Health Studies, as it is essential that applicants check with each higher education institution directly before applying to see if their qualifications meet the required entry standards.

3. Work Experience Placements

Short-term placements within the various branches of nursing may be arranged in order to give students an insight. However, on occasions we are unable to accommodate all students due to the high number of requests. Interested students should submit their requests via the school/college to:

The Human Resources Manager
Gibraltar Health Authority
5th Floor, St Bernard’s Hospital

4. Further Information:

Further information, regarding the various branches of nursing and midwifery, may be obtained from:

The School of Health Studies
Gibraltar Health Authority
7th Floor, St Bernard’s Hospital