



The Role of Nurses In Our Society Today

Dr. Veronica Freeman, Senior Manager, Clinical Consulting, Oracle Health

Nurses play an essential role in today's society — they're advocates for health promotion, educators of patient safety and wellness, participants in to acknowledge how the nursing profession has evolved, and how nurses have advanced their careers to decipher the role to be far more than it had been at inception. The work of nurses to consistently influence nursing concepts not only includes caring for the sick and the public, but being advocates for wellbeing and impacting positive patient outcomes.

Many regard Florence Nightingale as the founder of modern nursing as she laid a foundation of strong nursing principles like the importance of patient observation, rejecting stagnant industry practices, and implementing patient-first care practices. Her gritty determination and passion are characteristics that many midwives and nurses identify with today, especially with the demands faced due to COVID-19 and other health challenges seen in communities. As nurses, we provide evidence-based care, which advocates for public policy and framework for conducting

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research, which Nightingale influenced by her earlier work. Nurses also provide consistent and underserved attention to the patients and providing a patient-centered design, which fosters hospital environment wellbeing, safety, and health. Moreover, we work together as a team to validate outcomes of the results with data and give easy interpretation to improve the basic needs of our patients that we care for in both inpatient and outpatient venues of care. Lastly, nurses advocate for reforms that affect society and its health, so it is safe to say that Nightingale's work truly inspires nurses to promote health in the Middle East, which is just one of the many impacts we bring to the nursing profession.

It would be remiss of me during this holy time of Ramadan to ignore the contributions of the first Muslim nurse, Rufaidah Al-Asalmiya, who lived during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the eighth century and, like Nightingale, set up a training school for nurses, developed the first code of conduct and ethics, and was a promoter of community health. This influence is seen today by nurses in the Middle East as primary care providers promoting patient advocacy for patients by ensuring that they respect their rights and help them make informed decisions. It is the nurse's role of providing continuity of care and establishing an intense intimacy with the patient that builds trust and creates a safe environment for healing to take place. Patient advocacy is an ideal that is currently supported by many international nursing codes of practice. For the role to be accepted, Nightingale dispelled higher authorities about women being powerless and she also cooperated with other healthcare team members in which they incorporated this skill in modern nursing today.

The definition and roles of nurses are now sophisticated and can only be explained through experience, observation, and people's perceptions. Today, nurses are hailed as the true heroes of healthcare, often placing their own comforts after the needs of patients they care for day in and day out. In the past, women dominated



nursing because society and the public widely accepted their role but through the ever-evolving profession, men have made their presence known and the value they bring to the care for patients. They ensure that male patients feel represented and their needs addressed by individuals that look like them.

Currently, nurses play a huge role in the Middle East because they advocate for health promotion, patients and the public, along with supporting current COVID-19 patient needs. Florence Nightingale is the heroine for establishing and building nursing institutes that have paved the way for nurses in the Middle East and internationally, all in an effort to encourage more women to pursue nursing careers.

This Nurses Week, we salute Rufaidah Al-Asalmiya and Florence Nightingale for their contribution to nursing roles for all patients and their families. Today, nurses emulate both Rufaidah and Nightingale by advocating for patients and caring for them with compassion and determination. Take a moment to recognize and appreciate the nurses you know for the many sacrifices they make in caring for all patients. They will tell you "I'm only doing my job," but we all know it is more than that. They pour into patients' lives by showing empathy and a commitment to impacting the lives of patients and families. From one nurse to another, thank each and every one of you for all that you do – happy Nurses Week!

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