

Dear Bryan Alums:

This special edition of the Bryan Notes is being sent out to inform you of the probable fate of Bryan School of Nursing. It is quite likely that the school of nursing will close its doors in 1976, after 50 years of providing highly qualified nurses for the community. If you are concerned about this, or even beginning to realize the impact that initiation of such a program will have on patient care, there are some actions you must undertake in order to delay this plan until further research can be accomplished to ascertain the feasibility of a collegiate program for educating nurses. We are told that the reasons for closing diploma schools are: (1) Rising costs of nursing education; (2) Lack of state financial support to private schools; and (3) "Status Seeking" trends toward college education for everyone.

If Lincoln's diploma schools are closed, it will not occur until the University of Nebraska budget is approved to establish both an Associate Degree and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program on the Lincoln Campus. The A.D. program would produce RNs in two years, the B.S. program in four years. This program is supposed to save the hospital and the patient money. This proposal raises serious doubts in our minds.

Reportedly, at Bryan, the current senior nursing student costs the hospital at least \$500.00 per year. This cost is reflected in the patient's bill. What you may not realize, however, is that action has already been taken in an effort to reduce this cost. The three year diploma program at Bryan has been revamped to one of a three-year program where the student attends the college of his, or her choice at no expense to the hospital for the first year. He, or she, will also assume the financial responsibility for board, room, and texts, during the remaining two years of his, or her education. It was believed that the four listed changes would favorably reflect on the budget. However, the fiscal year does not become final in time for us to ascertain how these changes will effect the financial status of the school.

We have also become aware that existing concern over nursing education may affect the career plans of many high school students. They are uncertain as to which types nursing education programs will be open to them.

It has been brought to our attention that very little clinical experience is provided for the A.D. student. For instance, the inservice director of a large midwest metropolitan hospital, which hires many A.D. graduate RNs, who have taken the same Boards as Diploma Grads, states that upon graduation, the A.D. is prepared to take care of one to two patients, and has had no team-leading experience. They require at least three to six months (usually six months) of intensive education and clinical experience, before being capable of responsibility for good patient care. This is done while the nurses receive full salary. The inservice education at this hospital consisted of the first month being entirely classroom instruction. They then have supervised clinical experience, learning organization of larger patient loads and responsibility of team-leading. Additional inservice instructors have had to be hired at this hospital in order to complete the A.D. RNs education, (that is to bring her to the level of the Diploma Grad).

In Lincoln, at a starting salary of \$590.00 per month, this would mean an expenditure of \$1800.00 to \$3500.00 per A.D. RN, while the A.D. graduate is being prepared to function as a diploma RN functions upon graduation. We have not included in the above total, the cost of hiring more inservice educating personnel, or materials needed. Since this type of inservice program is virtually impossible for smaller towns and nursing homes, what quality of nursing care will be provided for these citizens, if diploma schools are closed?

We also wonder about the quantity of nurses. Lincoln's present diploma schools graduate 120+ nurses annually; the U. of N., A.D. program projects a graduating class of 55. The proposed degree program will need instructors with higher degrees in education than are presently available.

It seems that a more reasonable approach to the dilemma of educating nurses would be to keep the diploma schools open at least long enough to determine if the new collegiate program is feasible: (1) Financially; (2) Quantitatively; and (3) If the graduates are capable of maintaining the present standard of nursing care.

If you are concerned, your opinions must be heard. Communicate your views to doctors, nurses, civic leaders, and to Mr. Eugene Edwards, Administrator of Bryan, and to the Bryan Board of Trustees, %Bryan Hospital, 4848 Sumner, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

DON'T DELAY, ACTION MUST BE TAKEN NOW!!

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RETURNED FOR BETTER ADDRESS