

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Lack of identity is growing problem in nursing. Identifying professional nurses in a health care setting has become so complicated. We cannot underestimate the importance of uniforms. Nurses' uniform has become so casual and commonplace. Distinguishing among registered nurses, certified nurse assistants and licensed practical nurses has become very difficult. We all know that uniforms enable us to identify police officers, airline crewmembers and fire professionals. Therefore, it is important to develop a standard nurse's uniform.

Miss VanRensselaer designed the first nurse uniform while she was a student at Miss Nightingale's school of nursing. The uniform was typically a blue outfit and a nurse's cap. This led to the development of White tunic and epaulettes for male nurses. As time elapsed, alternative designs have emerged. These new uniforms have caused chaos in nursing profession. The traditional nurse uniform has been replaced by a dark blue trouser and tunic- style top. Some nurses put on a red jacket over their normal uniforms. Hospitals have even gone ahead to allow their nurses to put on polo shirts.

It is also common to find nurses putting on scrubs, which is even more popular. The later has brought with it more confusion. Some nurses claim that the scrub is easier to clean with reference to the traditional uniforms while others maintain that they are far much better.

As identifying nurses continue to be more complicated, Patients are the ones who suffer. They cannot easily identify nurses from other hospital personnel (Kreml, 2003). Patients may confuse and cleaners, surgeons or domestic staff.

Uniforms not only enable patients to easily identify the nurses, it enables them to have confidence an dignity. In order to solve the problem, all

stakeholders should come together on a round table to develop solutions. Unless they develop fresh ideas that can change the state of things, there will be even greater problems in identifying health care staff. They should come up with a standard uniform for registered nurses, certified nurse assistants and licensed practical nurses, each clearly different from the other. This is the only way of ensuring that nursing profession goes back to its glorious uniform tradition.

Kreml, B. (2003). Nursing Problem. *Health Affairs*. 22(2): pp. 282-283.
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