

REPORT ON VISIT FROM PROF. KIM LUTZEN: Friday, 6 November 1998, KAROLINSKA INSTITUTE (DEPT OF NURSING) STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

INTRODUCTION

Prof. Kim Lutzen contacted the Department of Advanced Nursing Sciences, Unisa, via the Department's Web Page. Prof. Lutzen is the Chair of the Department of Nursing, which offers undergraduate, master's and doctoral programmes. This Department of Nursing is situated within the Karolinska Institute, which comprises 29 Departments of Health Sciences, including a number of Medical Departments, Dentistry, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and Nursing. Prof. Lutzen emphasised that there is no Swedish phrase similar to "nursing science", consequently this term seems to be somewhat unfamiliar to the Swedish nurses.

Prof. Lutzen explained that the Department of Nursing at the Karolinska Institute decided not to become a WHO Collaboration Centre, as they were busy reorganising the curricula for various courses. However, a number of other Departments in the Institute are WHO Collaboration Centres.

Prof. Lutzen's special fields of interest are Psychiatric Nursing and Nursing Ethics, especially within the trans-cultural context.

PURPOSE OF VISIT

Prof. Lutzen visited the Department to investigate the possibility of exchanging staff and students between the two institutions. The nature of distance education and the absence of students from the campus were explained to Prof. Lutzen. Nevertheless, she promised to investigate the matter after her return to Sweden. Should any possibilities exist, she will contact us again. A further issue complicating such an exchange of staff and students could be the inability of many Swedish students to communicate effectively in English. A need would seem to exist to offer English courses to nursing students in Sweden, to facilitate international exchange of students.

NURSING COURSES OFFERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING, KAROLINSKA INSTITUTE, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

Approximately 2 000 students are registered for all the nursing courses offered.

Upgrading programme

Currently nurses can only follow degree programmes, having successfully completed twelve years schooling, in order to become registered professional nurses in Sweden. However, large numbers of currently registered nurses followed the previously available two or three-and-a-half year programmes. These professional nurses can follow a one-year full-time upgrading programme at the Department of Nursing, Karolinska Institute. These students pose educational challenges because they represent vastly different educational backgrounds. A large number of these students also experience problems in reading English, which limits the number of international nursing journals accessible to these students.

Distance education courses

The nurses who live and work on the Gottland Island can follow distance education courses. For this purpose use is made of videoconferences, the internet and television.

BSc Nursing

This degree constitutes 120 credit units of which 60 must be obtained within the Nursing Department. These nursing courses emphasise the importance of nursing care, nursing ethics, cancer care and geriatrics as a large portion of the Swedish population is older than 56 years of age. The multidisciplinary team approach is emphasised together with aspects of trans-cultural nursing, especially as related to nursing ethics. Social Health is also emphasised as violence is regarded as being a serious long-term problem in many Swedish communities.

Graduates are registered as general nurses only.

Master's programmes

In Sweden master's students are regarded as being important for helping to develop the identity of nursing as a profession and as a discipline.

The Master's programme offers various options. Each master's student needs to submit a dissertation about an approved topic, which earns the student 80 credits. The additional credits are earned by following a course in the selected speciality in which the student might wish to obtain additional registration. These options include Psychiatry (40 credits); Geriatrics (40 credits); Cancer Care (40 credits); Midwifery (60 credits) and District Nursing (60 credits).

A problem currently encountered in Sweden is that all patients, including psychiatric patients, are discharged from hospital much sooner than in the past. Thus a larger number of seriously ill patients need to be cared for in the community. This creates problems, especially where the families are unable to care for seriously ill psychiatric patients. Students prepared at Master's level for District Nursing and for Psychiatric Nursing should be better able to accommodate these patients' needs.

Doctoral programmes

Prof. Lutzen is promoting a number of doctoral students. She meets with five doctoral students every week for one-and-a-half hours to discuss their progress. These group discussions proved to be valuable to all students as they learn from each other, provide support and encouragement to each other that far exceeds that which the promoter could provide to the individuals.

Doctoral programmes, at this Swedish university, do not require formal teaching components, but they are provided according to the specific needs expressed by the students.

FURTHER DISCUSSIONS

The situation about basic (R425) nursing education in the RSA was explained to Prof. Kim Lutzen, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate nursing education courses available to nurses in the RSA.

CONCLUSION

Prof. Lutzen was given South African publications and a Unisa calendar. Learning about the similarities and differences in nursing education approaches in the RSA and Sweden proved to be most useful.

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