Nursing may be more academic these days - but not if you are Finnish

This month it was my turn once again to renew my UKCC registration. When I came to fill in the section ‘Further academic qualifications, degrees or diplomas’, I realised that my two degrees, MA and BA, have never been printed on my form. I telephoned the UKCC to ask whether nursing or related degrees only were included – to be told that was not the case but that as both of my degrees were obtained at a university in Finland, they could not be recorded on my professional register.

I am amazed at such outdated criteria – in the days when there is meant to be free movement of labour and students inside the European Union (both Finland and UK being member countries), and when many UK hospitals are recruiting highly qualified nurses from countries such as Finland. In contrast, British universities obviously recognise these qualifications as I myself have been accepted for postgraduate studies in this country. This is without doubt a matter that should be addressed on the EU legislation level.

Laila King
High Wycombe

UKCC spokesperson Stuart Skye responds: ‘These criteria are laid down by the EU. If these degrees were registrable qualifications in Finland, and Ms King had registered them with the Finnish regulatory body, she would be able to apply to have them recorded on the UKCC entry. If they were not but were subsequent, recordable qualifications on the Finnish register or were not on that register at all, she would not be able to record them on her entry with the UKCC. Either way, the degrees are ‘valid’ in terms of her academic attainment and personal development, it’s just that they may not be recordable on the register – which is a voluntary activity anyway.’

Complementary therapies follow Hippocrates

Things have changed considerably since Claire Rayner qualified in 1954.

Nurses like myself are waking up to the fact that there is more than one way into the human mechanism and patients everywhere will be the benefactors.

Ms Rayner describes herself as a writer and broadcaster but has certainly used her nurse training to ‘lend an air of respectability’ to her robust, out-of-date opinions on all matters concerning health and illness.

Naturopathy, in particular, is the oldest science of medicine and established on the doctrine of Hippocrates, the first principle being that the medicine should do no harm.

Nurses who advocate alternative or complementary therapies do no harm.

Jane Dean
London

Naturopathy is a different approach to illness

As a naturopath I would like to comment on Ms Rayner’s view of naturopathy as quackery. Naturopathy requires a four-year honours degree course and is an established alternative to orthodox medicine with a sound philosophy to support its principles.

The ‘real contact with whole people’ needs to be put back into nursing, however this will have little if any affect on the popularity of natural therapies since it is not just the extra caring the public want but a different approach to illness.

Elizabeth Season
Bristol

Reiki helped me to cope with stress

I recently had cause to require anti-stress therapy after a car accident six months ago. I had several choices of treatment and I decided to choose reiki, which I knew nothing about at the time.

I can only tell you that it was the most relaxing experience of my life, and I had a lovely floating sensation as I came down from the couch. I felt so relaxed for the remainder of that day and had a deep relaxing sleep that night and several after.

The following week, I tried reflexology which was also relaxing, but I still preferred reiki treatment as I personally derived more relaxation from it. I returned on a weekly basis and felt stronger and more able to cope with stressful situations.

My therapist suggested I learn reiki and gave me the necessary information. I’ve just completed the course. The effect was amazing and not only did I feel at peace with myself, I could make decisions about my life which had been put ‘on hold’ for ages. I now give reiki therapy myself and derive great pleasure in helping to promote healing in other people.

Carol McLaren
Fraserburgh

The Admiral Nursing Service helps the carer

Following my ‘On the move’ appearance (News July 7), I felt I should clarify the role of the Admiral Nursing Service in which specialist nurses work in the community to support the carers of people with dementia.

The needs of the person with
Dementia figure directly in the assessments made by Admiral nurses, but it is the needs of the carers which determine the nature of the interventions made.

We work in partnership with the Dementia Relief Trust, the charity responsible for developing new and existing Admiral Nurse Services.

By specialising in dementia, Admiral nurses can focus on research, care and practice and the team is able to develop a quality approach to casework, accumulate comprehensive information about local services, and keep abreast of developments elsewhere.

Admiral nurses also provide a consultancy role in the education, training and support of other professionals working in the field of dementia care.

Madeline Armstrong, Admiral Nurse team leader, London

Someone should know how to use sign language

The article ‘Audiology and hearing impairment – improving the quality of care’ (Art&Science July 14) was very interesting and clearly written. However as the mother of a deaf child who uses total communication – speech, lipreading and British Sign Language, I was amazed that in the section on communication there was no mention of sign language.

A large proportion of born-deaf people communicate in this way, and for them to receive best quality care and understanding of their treatment while in hospital, it is vital there is a member of staff at hand who can understand and communicate in sign language.

Christine Gibson
Wallsend

Feedback

Where do you stand on GMOs?

The Health and Safety Commission has asked the RCN for its views on a consultation document on genetically modified organisms. The consultation is being carried out to establish whether UK law should be changed.

The intended purpose of the proposed changes is to: strengthen protection of human health and the environment; and streamline administrative procedures.

The RCN does not hold a policy position on genetically modified organisms. If you work in this area, we would welcome your views. The consultation document Proposals for The Revised Genetically Modified Organisms (contained use) can be obtained from the following Internet website: www.open.gov.uk/hse/condocs/

As the consultation period ends on August 8, please contact me by August 4 so I have time to formulate a response.

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