Avoid making assumptions about today’s new generation of nurses

Doreen Robinson (letters October 31) says the new generation of nurses may be well educated, but they do not want to nurse patients. She adds: ‘By this, I mean look after them, clean, feed or even communicate with them.’

As a staff nurse who qualified three years ago, I am one of this new generation of nurses. I can assure Ms Robinson that I do want to nurse patients. On more occasions than I can remember, I have washed and fed patients, held their hands and comforted them. I talk to them and their families. I treat my patients as individuals, and make sure they feel comfortable and cared for. These are the reasons I love being a nurse.

I suggest Ms Robinson gets to know the values of the new generation before writing off an entire community of nurses.

Samuel Gleed, by email

DUBIOUS ATTITUDES TO YOUNGER COLLEAGUES NEED CHALLENGING

I read with interest Doreen Robinson’s letter (October 31) complaining that we are no longer recruiting the right sort of people into nursing.

As a 22-year-old staff nurse educated at university, I can say with pride that the main part of my job involves caring for vulnerable patients, which I do with compassion and empathy.

My greatest enjoyment is getting to know my patients, washing them, assisting with feeding, shaving and washing their hair.

Rather than looking at nurse training and who is being recruited, it is perhaps the attitude of other nurses that needs to be challenged.

Please do not tar all young nurses with the same brush.

Sam Edwards, by email

THE ROLE OF NURSES IS CHANGING, BUT WE DO IT BECAUSE WE CARE

Doreen Robinson believes the new generation of nurses are the wrong sort of people (letters October 31). Her rationale is that they may be well educated, but they do not want to feed, clean or communicate with patients.

As a final-year nursing student who will soon become ‘the wrong sort of person’, Ms Robinson needs to be reminded that the new generation of nurses are well educated because they need to be.

The role of the nurse is changing and developing. We have to be knowledgeable about the care we provide, and not simply operate under a doctor’s instruction with a cheerful smile and a bedpan at the ready.

Patient-centred care, personal care, nutritional support and communication are at the forefront of nursing principles taught in university. They are also embedded in the Nursing and Midwifery Council code of conduct.

I would be happy for any of my fellow university classmates to care for my loved ones should the need arise. We all care. That is why we chose to become nurses.

David Scott, by email

REGULATION WILL GIVE HEALTHCARE ASSISTANTS INVALUABLE SUPPORT

It was with disappointment that I read the regrettable and poorly thought through comments from NHS Employers director Dean Royles on the subject of healthcare assistant regulation (news November 7). He argues that you ‘cannot regulate for a smile’. Of course you can’t.

What you can do, however, is regulate the people who are expected to smile, care and treat millions of people each year. Regulation might not ‘guarantee compassion’, as he says, but it certainly makes it more likely when a workforce is accountable, supported...