



# NURSING IN THE COMMUNITY

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# NURSING IN THE COMMUNITY

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# Preface

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*Nursing in the Community* can be summarized briefly as a comprehensive text for all nurses who work in the community and all students who are preparing for community nursing roles. But the text does more, since it recognizes that the traditional community health nursing role is changing. For much of its history community health nursing focused on preventive health care. Although this still remains the primary nursing role in the community, other nursing positions are developing in response to trends in society and the health care system. Some of the changes have been forced by federal legislation such as the 1983 federal action that changed the reimbursement system for Medicare from a primary emphasis on hospitalization to one that encouraged early discharge of most hospitalized clients. This in effect both changed and expanded the work of home health care nurses, case managers, and discharge planning nurses. Other changes have occurred in the roles of nurse practitioners, nurse-midwives, school nurses, and occupational health nurses. The result has been a change from the traditional role of nurses in the community delivering only preventive care to a varied role demanding more skills and ability as nurses are called on to fill a variety of nursing jobs in the community.

To tie these changes together the nursing process is used as the organizing framework for a discussion of these roles. The nursing process can be applied to a variety of community settings with a variety of clients. Since these changes did not occur in a vacuum, we have attempted to put them in their historical and sociologic perspective, more so than most other community health texts. It is hoped that by understanding where nurses came from and where we are now, readers can plan more effectively for the future.

We clustered the content of the book into seven units that help focus topics. Chapter outlines and

objectives are presented at the beginning of each chapter to highlight and organize the material, and each chapter concludes with a summary and some questions for discussion. It is hoped that any discussion will move away from the material in the text and allow readers to use their own knowledge and experience in the discussion. For those interested in further reading or even further research into special topics, references and bibliographies are included at the end of each chapter.

Community nursing has always been demanding of nurses, but it seems to be more demanding now than ever before. This demand places a responsibility on nurses to obtain the most advanced knowledge and skills possible for their practice. This book provides the beginning framework and basic knowledge of community nursing, but community health nursing encompasses more than any single book can include. Additional reading and observation in the field are needed to meet the challenge of work in the community.

This book represents a collaborative effort, not only between the two editors, nurses who happen to be married to each other and longtime collaborators, but also between all the contributors. Our contributors were picked because of their expertise and their ability to communicate ideas. They represent all sections of the United States and have a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. We believe they are an outstanding group, and we hope that you will agree.

A book, however, requires much more than an author sitting down at a word processor and typing. It requires the collaborative effort of a whole array of workers from editors and copyeditors to secretaries and reference checkers. Many people helped put this book together, not the least of whom are Mary Boldt and Ann Marie Bindert, secretaries in the dean's office at the State Uni-

versity of New York at Buffalo School of Nursing. Although these two are mentioned by name, the secretaries of all the contributors, some of whose names we do not know, are equally important. Ruth Heintz deserves special thanks for her prizewinning photographs. Special acknowledgement is due to the Hospital Home Health Care Agency of California, which also furnished some of the photographs. Janet Roes Salter wrote the instructor's manual for *Nursing in the Commu-*

*nity*, which professors of community health nursing will find useful. Last but not least, thanks are due to those at Mosby who did the final work on the manuscript, particularly Darlene Como, Laurie Sparks, and Tim Sainz. Obviously there are many others who contributed whom we have not mentioned, and we hope they accept our love and appreciation. We think *Nursing in the Community* is an outstanding book, and we hope you will agree.

Bonnie Bullough  
Vern Bullough



## NURSING IN THE COMMUNITY

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NURSES have filled a variety of community-based roles since the nineteenth century, although their titles and job descriptions have changed over time. The nineteenth century district nurse became the public health nurse of the early twentieth century and the community health nurse of the current era. The visiting nurse of the past is now the home health care nurse, and the industrial nurse of the 1940s is today's occupational health care nurse. School nurses have retained their title, but in many settings they are facing expanded role expectations. In addition, some new community nursing roles are developing, including those of case manager, nurse practitioner, and hospital discharge planning nurse.

The two chapters in the first section trace the history of these changes and describe the current array of community nursing positions. This broader focus departs somewhat from the tradition in community texts, which in the past emphasized the preventive care-oriented community health nurse. This book includes that focus but adds material about the new developments in the community. The decision to include the new and changing roles is based primarily on recent developments in the health care delivery system. Clients are being discharged from hospitals, mental institutions, and skilled nursing homes earlier in the illness cycle. The result is an increased demand for nursing care in the community and new challenges for the community-oriented nursing work force.

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# Nursing in the Community: the Context

# U N I T I





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# CHAPTER

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# 1

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## Dynamic Nature of Community Nursing: Early Historical Background



Lillian Wald



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## CHAPTER OUTLINE

Beginnings of public health  
Development of modern public health  
Melting pot  
Early public health efforts  
District nursing  
Visiting nurses  
Lillian Wald and the settlement houses  
Public health nursing  
Rural public health nursing  
Increasing government support  
Summary

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## OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, the reader should be able to:

1. Trace the highlights of the history of the interdisciplinary public health movement.
2. Understand the impact of immigration on the public health needs of Americans.
3. Describe the accomplishments of Lillian Wald.
4. Trace the development of the community nursing role from its origins in district nursing to the present.