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Wandering Interns in Internship Sections

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Dear Editor

The main goal of nursing education is training nurses, who are able to care for clients in clinical settings. Clinical learning is an essential part of nursing education (1). The internship course of nursing students is training during work, where students learn through repetitive practice in clinical settings. This course is passing from being a student to being a nurse. In addition, the presence of interns somehow eliminates the need for workforce in clinical settings, despite the fact that this subject is not pointed out in the educational curriculum (2). During the nursing internship course, students have a sufficient time to interact with patients and healthcare team members due to a long-term presence in the clinical setting, which leads to acquiring the necessary individual competencies and professional competence. Obtaining the necessary qualifications by students facilitates the acceptance of these individuals by the healthcare team members. Meanwhile, this course prepares students for independence and presence in an actual work place (3). Preparing students for the internship course should have sufficient cost and effectiveness so that new graduated nurses could properly understand their role (2).

Studies show that recently graduated nurses feel as they lack the necessary qualifications, trust, and clinical skills, and are worry about errors that might be made during medical procedures (4). Currently, internship courses of nurses are different from professional duties of these individuals in the ward. Despite the clarity of the internship program about working in the internship ward to be

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independent of instructors, the accepted students are not the personnel of the ward. While just a part of the primary works is allocated to students, these individuals are ignored by the personnel. As a result, students are isolated and cannot properly interact with the personnel, who are their future colleagues. Generally, specialized works are not assigned to internship students, which can lead to lack of ability and competence of students to carry out professional and specialized activities in medical wards (3).

As stated before, other goals of the internship course are filling the gap between theory and practice and striving for student's independence and dynamism in clinical settings (5). Accepting students from scientific, practical and communicative aspects and as a colleague by nurses is another goal of this course, which is practically not achieved. Other achievements of internship course include training to become a professional and accountable nurse, being professionally committed, having a humanistic approach toward clients, acquiring a professional role and having a defined identity (3), which are not obtained as well, since students cannot directly care for patients and can only perform some specific procedures (e.g., checking vital signs and changing patient dressing) (2). Commitment and responsibility of students are developed through direct participation in medical processes as a member of the care team (6). The current approach fails to develop the commitment and accountability of students. Recently, one of the problems of internship courses is irregular entrance and exit of student to the internship ward and lack of having a regulated work, which leads to unwillingness of interns to work (7).

As observed, despite the ideal philosophy of the nursing internship course for students, these individuals cannot obtain work independence and beneficial experiences during this period to gain their nursing role, which results in confusion and reduced effectiveness of the course (6). It is recommended that further studies be conducted by the experts of this field to overcome the existing restrictions in this area. In addition, measures should be taken in order to pass the internship course by nursing students through the planning of the managers of wards, so that the complete care of patients is assigned to the newly graduated nurses. Moreover, it is suggested that the mission and goals of the internship course be evaluated and modified. Motivation of students of this course by giving salaries and benefits equal to

facilities provided for the personnel can result in the realization of the major goal of this course.

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