

NRS 430V Topic 3 DQ 1

How has nursing practice evolved over time? Discuss the key leaders and historical events that have influenced the advancement of nursing, nursing education, and nursing roles that are now part of the contemporary nursing profession.

Evolution of Nursing

Nursing Practice has been continuously evolving. “The history of nursing is vast; it is said to have begun with the medicine men in ancient times, continued into Florence Nightingale’s time during the Crimean War, and progressed to the profession known today” (Dean, J. K., 2018, chapter 3, Nursing as a Professional Discipline). “The very first nurses were a lot like the nurses of the 21st century, and they cared for the sick because they felt a calling to do so” (Dean, J. K., 2018, chapter 2, Introduction). Nursing profession is mostly chosen today because of better financial stability. In the old days men were the only caregivers but today both men and women practice nursing. Nurses wore white dresses and caps before but now they wear scrubs. “Knowledge of illness and treatment for illness was provided on a trial-and-error basis, as science and research were not yet known, and evidence-based practice was yet to be acknowledged” (Dean, J. K., 2018, chapter 2, Nursing History).

Some of the historical nursing leaders were as follows:

- Florence Nightingale who is known as the “Mother of Modern Nursing”, no historical account of the profession is complete without noting Florence Nightingale’s contribution. She made history with her service for the British military during the Crimean War, where she developed the Polar Area Diagram that led to modern hospital sanitation practices. (Ohio State University, 2020)
- Clara Barton abandoned her career as a teacher to fill a more pressing role in delivering medical supplies during the American Civil War. Dubbed the “Angel of the battlefield” for her relief efforts, Barton eventually founded the American Red Cross. She continued her work with the organization through 1904. (Ohio State University, 2020)