

10.5.4

13 Welgemeend Street,

CAPETOWN.

July 26th, 1932.

Dear Sir,

PROPOSED SPECIAL NURSING TRAINING FOR NATIVE AREAS

At the Conference called by the South African Institute of Race Relations and held at Bloemfontein in June there was a long discussion on the training and Employment of Non-European Nurses, with special reference to the desirability or otherwise of instituting a special Nursing Certificate for Natives.

There was general agreement that Native Nurses, both General and Midwifery, holding the certificate or Certificates of the Medical Council, had proved their worth in all spheres, and that it was desirable to continue training Non-Europeans for these Certificates, and to extend facilities for so doing wherever possible. Eloquent testimony to their value in various locations was given. All present at the Conference were emphatic that no bar or discouragement should be put up which might prevent any Non-European from taking the same certificates as the European. It was however realised that the urgent and great need for Nursing services, especially in rural areas, is hardly touched by the small number of Nurses who can be trained, most of whom find employment in urban areas.

It was also shown that a number of Nurses only holding a Certificate of the Hospital at which they had been trained were doing valuable work in hospitals and locations. There are many institutions, not eligible to be accepted by the Union Medical Council as Training Schools for its examinations, which can give a thoroughly practical training comprising general nursing, elementary midwifery and elementary sanitation, which would fit a nurse for work under supervision in rural areas. It was felt that in this way many more Native girls could be trained, and the insistent demand partly met.

The Trained Nurses' Association is properly anxious that the institution of any such lower grade of Nurse should not in any way lead to the lowering of the standard of education, preliminary or professional, or of the status of the Trained Nurse or Midwife under the Union Medical Council, and the Representatives of the Association at the Conference were most desirous that the proposed lower grade training should not be associated with the Medical Council, but should be managed, and any Register kept, by some other body, so that no confusion with the Union Council's Certificates would be likely. They were also anxious that the term "Nurse" should not be applied to the holders of the lower grade certificate.

- Provided -

Provided that it can be assured on these points, the Trained Nurses' Association is ready to co-operate in trying to institute a grade of "Health Workers" on the lines of training indicated above. It is desirable that all institutions should follow a curriculum of training for a definite period, with a uniform examination, and that those who are successful should be registered and controlled after qualification.

The following resolution was passed:-

- (a) That a sub-committee be appointed to draw up a scheme for training Non-European nurses, male and female, on a lower grade curriculum and examination than those of the S.A. Medical Council, those so trained to be termed "Health Workers" and that the Committee approach the Royal Sanitary Institute with the object of the Institute being the examining and registering body.

The following were appointed to the Committee:

Dr. H.A. Moffat (Convener) Drs. Hamilton Dyke, A.B. Taylor and R.H. Welsh, Miss B.G. Alexander, Mrs. W.G. Bennie and the Chairman of the Royal Sanitary Institute, the Committee to have power to co-opt.

- (b) That such inferior certificate be granted to Non-Europeans who will only be permitted to practise in certain defined areas and as officers under the adequate control of some recognised body.

The Committee meets in Johannesburg early in September and it will be greatly helped by having the opinions of those in actual touch with the training of Native girls. As Convener I therefore approach you with a request for your help i.e. your observations generally as well as on the following particular points:

1. Do you think it desirable to institute such a grade of Nurse?
2. If so, do you think the Union Medical Council or some other body should organise it?
3. What do you think of the following suggested conditions:
 - a) Minimum age at entry; 18 years suggested.
 - b) General Educational Qualification; Sixth Standard suggested.
 - c) Period of training; three years suggested.
4. Could your Institution give some Midwifery experience?
5. If it is found impossible to bring such a grade of Nurse under a governing body with a legal register, do you think that it would be possible or useful

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for the South African Institute of Race Relations to try to get a scheme drawn up by M.O.H.s and Nurses, of a syllabus of training and standards of examinations, in order to help small hospitals towards a fairly uniform standard of training of their Nurses? This would be purely voluntary.

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Yours truly,

(Dr.) H.A.Moffat.

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