

Health nurses work for patients' independence

By LYNN ORR

Scrap one more stereotype—that of the underpaid public health nurse in the blue cap tacking up a quarantine sign on a measles-infested house.

Women's liberation, greater dependence on public services, educational background—a combination of those stimuli have propelled the nursing role into a wider arena.

Home visits retain a major share of the public health nursing occupation; but the visits have changed, along with the approach.

A visit to Eagle Elementary School might find public health nurse Shoula Kazanowski teaching physically handicapped children how to catheterize themselves.

Counseling pregnant teenagers and junior high age alcoholics is part of the job at Power Junior High. Child abuse, incest, health problems, or money woes might be the impetus for family counseling during home visits.

Patient advocacy and trouble-shooting are the tenets by which the public health nurse works; and independence for the patient is the nurse's goal.

"WE'RE just as much social workers as we are nurses," says Mrs. Kazanowski, 24, one of seven Oakland County nurses assigned to the Farmington area.

One problem for the nurses is a lack of dentists and physicians in the area who accept Medicaid and Medicare patients. One of her jobs is to get that patient to the right resource.

"One of the principal roles of a public health nurse is being in tune with what's available in the community and making referrals. There are many services that are paid for by tax dollars, but people don't know about them."

"That irks me, and it's my job to plug families in need of help into the right resources."

A Mercy College graduate and registered nurse, Mrs. Kazanowski stresses that patient independence is a primary goal.

"If I'm working harder than the patient to solve problems, I'm not doing my job."

She spends her time each week working at Eagle and Middlebelt Elementary Schools, Power Junior High, New Horizons (a sheltered workshop for the mentally handicapped) and serves as Oakland County nursing liaison for Botsford General Hospital. She also spends about half her time with home visits, usually patients who've been referred through the schools or other agencies, or those who have requested county assistance.

Persons in the Farmington area can

call 424-7000 at the Oakland County Health Department to find out about the various services offered, including the well-baby clinic, VD testing, vision and hearing screening, group classes in various areas, and immunizations. All services are free.

Today's public health nurse earns an average \$15,000 annual salary. Promoting good health, immunizations,

and nutrition are important parts of the job; counseling alcoholic 12-year-olds is another.

Contrary to public opinion, social problems are prevalent in upper and middle income families, as well as the indigent, Mrs. Kazanowski said.

DRESSED in street clothes, armed with information handouts, and fully employing tact and psychological

methods in meeting her patients' needs, Mrs. Kazanowski is a vivid example of the role change for nurses. The profession is aware of the change as well. 1977 was labeled the "Year of the Nurse," and community awareness of the changing nursing role is an important aspect of the transformation.

"Traditionally, nursing is a very

mothering, nurturing kind of profession and not political," she explained. "As nursing becomes truly a profession, inevitably we have to become involved with politics if we hope to effectuate any kind of change, whether it's with social services or anything else."

"We have to get involved with lobbying."

The change may be an identity crisis for some nurses but not for Mrs. Kazanowski. Her husband is a public health nurse in Royal Oak, and they see their troubleshooting roles as advancements for nurses.

"Our effectiveness depends on the kind of rapport we establish with families, social services, and the schools," she said. When a child develops a

problem, she believes the family should be counseled as a unit.

"Usually we're trying to relieve stress. If getting food is a problem, I'll troubleshoot and try to plug the family into resources that will help them. You relieve the stress to deal with the other problems."

ALCOHOLISM is the number one problem she finds, often a contributing factor to other family problems that may surface in a child's problems in school.

Emotional neglect and mental abuse, along with physical child abuse,

are making countless phone calls in search of some help for a family.

AT TIMES, the role of a troubleshooter gets frustrating, she admits.

"It's a real fight to keep positive and optimistic. After a while you want to scream to the world. Even though you've tried 10 times before, you have to say to yourself: This is a different person and a different situation, and I have to try one more time."

"It's a job I love, but I have to be careful how I plan my day. I try to end it on an upbeat note."

Visits promise help, hope

By LYNN ORR

At 8:30 a.m., public health nurse Shoula Kazanowski is already at Eagle Elementary School with a number of tasks before her.

She asks about the well-being of a student who recently underwent surgery. She answers staff questions about a nutrition unit she taught a week ago. She takes a look at a sore on a kindergarten's lip.

She checks on the progress of an orthopedic student who is learning how to catheterize herself, necessary every three to four hours.

She consults with a teacher about a child who's appeared in school with bruises again.

By 10:30 a.m. she's ready to move out for her first home visit; Mrs. W. ignores her own medical problems and worries about her family's social problems.

"Have you been to the doctor?" Mrs. Kazanowski quietly asks Mrs. W. Inside the neat, suburban ranch home, Mrs. W. is close to tears. The family is without health insurance but doesn't qualify for social services. The doctor Mrs. W. has been seeing doesn't accept Medicare patients.

"I wanted to use the \$25 to pay the phone bill," Mrs. W. replies. Mrs. Kazanowski asks about the fuel payments Mrs. W. and the utility companies have worked out, after receiving a shut-off reprieve a few weeks ago.

Mrs. Kazanowski's attempts throughout the interview are to encourage Mrs. W. to see a physician regularly and promote self-esteem.

"I'm worried about if my husband loses his job again," Mrs. W. admits, her lip shaking.

"Let's take it day-to-day," Mrs. Kazanowski suggests. "The main thing is to get healthy and happy so you have time to cuddle and talk to your children. They need you and you need time for yourself."

Perhaps immigrating to the U.S.

from Greece at the age of 12, unable to speak English, gives Mrs. Kazanowski a special empathy for the foreign-born like Mrs. W.

For families coping with a multitude of problems, Mrs. Kazanowski may be the only friendly face among a sea of social service strangers.

She understands the language and intimidation problems of a woman who is proud, yet in need of help.

Mrs. Kazanowski first became involved with the case through the school problems of one of the children. Treating the family as a unit, relieving stress, and promoting self-esteem by encouraging self-help are part of the job.

After reassuring Mrs. W. that she'll keep in touch, she's on to her next visit, with a woman who copes with an alcoholic husband and children with problems in school.

Like Mrs. W., Mrs. M. has medical problems of her own after undergoing surgery. It's the public health nurse's job to try to relieve stress for the entire family.

She enters the cramped but tidy home with a smile.

"How's it going?" Mrs. Kazanowski begins. "You're looking pretty good, but you look tired."

"I think I ran around too much yesterday," Mrs. M. says sheepishly. Knowing someone cares is medicinal in itself.

Ms. John taking his medication on a regular basis?" Mrs. Kazanowski questions, knowing from school personnel that the answer is negative.

"The doctor said he should only take it once a day," Mrs. M. replies.

"That's unusual," Mrs. Kazanowski. "If it's all right with you, I'd like to talk to the doctor about it. And when are you going to see your doctor?"

In one fell swoop, Mrs. Kazanowski encourages Mrs. M. to do something for herself, yet gives support by taking on a job Mrs. M. is reluctant to do—talking to

authority figures.

After a lengthy visit, it's on to her third stop—checking on the progress of a five-month-old baby and her young mother.

"I can see how you're doing," she says gleefully to the baby. "Mom is taking good care of you."

Young Carolyn's mother takes her to the child health clinic offered on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at the First Methodist Church in Farmington. Appointments are scheduled free of charge by calling 557-1400, ext. 274.

At Carolyn's last visit, it was noticed that her weight is slightly above average. As a breast-feeding mother, Mrs. R. had questions about how to regulate Carolyn's feedings.

"How do I know she's getting enough?" Mrs. R. asks.

"She can feed as much as she likes at regular feeding times, but you're going to have to start saying no. That lays a heavy guilt trip on you because we're all taught to provide for our children if we're going to be good parents. But if Carolyn wants to run out in the street in a few years, you'd say no. Good nutrition habits start early as well."

Reassurance and an opportunity to get her questions answered is an obvious aid to Mrs. R. The whole visit is one of the happy ones for Mrs. Kazanowski.

"That's how I try to end my day," she says. Careful planning, in terms of that visit's goals, are necessary before making a home visit. Mrs. Kazanowski wants to make sure the right messages are getting home.

Very often, discretion and tact are the effective tools.

"If I know a child needs mother's attention and loving, I try to point that out positively," she explains.

She might say to the mother: "If we can relieve your worries, you'll have more time to cuddle with Terry."



Shoula Kazanowski usually is on the road, as part of her job as a public health nurse. (Staff photo by Allen Schlossberg)

THE INSIDE * ANGLE

*YOU GOTTA know that election year is upon us. The mail from politicians has increased at least ten-fold since last month. Here is an example of how our diligent legislators are striving for perfection (or at least a little more attention). Farmington's State Representative SANDY BROTHERTON, a Republican, recently announced that he introduced a bill which requires that vicious dogs be destroyed. The measure would amend the current dog law which gives the common pleas or district court the choice of ordering a vicious dog killed or confined. Brotherton didn't state whether the bill only applied to Democratic dogs.

*WHICH REMINDS ME, the word is out that Gov. WILLIAM MILLIKEN is planning to participate in this year's Farmington Founders Festival parade. My guess is that the parade probably will last another half hour longer than usual because of the number of political hopefuls who might want to participate. I recommend that the Founders Committee enforce a ruling which prohibits politicians from participating in the parade. Think about it.

*SPEAKING OF politics, Farmington Hills political hopeful RICHARD HEADLEE, of the Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co., will be speaking at Bloomfield Hills' Lahser High School auditorium tomorrow. As you may or may not know, Headlee is leading a petition drive to place a proposed tax limitation amendment to the state constitution on the November ballot. Three, one hour programs will be at 7, 8 and 9 p.m. The INSIDE ANGLES is betting that Headlee will follow his mentor, GEORGE ROMNEY, to the governor's mansion.

*ON THE MORE significant side of life, LEE PEEL, of the Farmington Historical Society, will be giving a slide presentation on Farmington's old homes on April 25 at the downtown library.

*I'M ABLE to relay this information thanks to a letter from Historical Society veeper NANCY LEONARD. Which reminds me, Nancy, what in heaven's name do the initials FFBFI stand for? Could it possibly be the Farmington Branch of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Thanks too, for the cartoon from "Shoe." Yes, indeed, we do feel that way sometimes.

*ANOTHER THANKS goes out to BARB HUGHES, of Farmington Hills for informing me on the meaning of "to worry animals." A few weeks back in THE CRACKERBARREL DEBATE I wrote a column making fun of a proposed Farmington Hills ordinance which dis-

allowed persons walking across school property from "worrying animals." Oh yes, as you probably guessed, the author of the Inside Angles and Crackerbarrel Debate are one and the same.

*FARM AFICIANADOS, pay heed. The Michigan Crop Reporting Service has instituted a FARMERS' NEWSLINE, toll free, of course, which gives a different report daily on various aspects of the farming world. If you're lonesome some night after TOM SNYDER has left the air, tune in at 800-624-754. Some of the subjects discussed this week will be livestock slaughter, weather and crops, fats and oils, vegetables and agricultural prices.

*A SERIOUS MATTER. The safe and effective care of family members who are ill at home is the topic of a Red Cross course offered free of charge on Mondays at 10 a.m. - noon at the Red Cross Oak Park office, 2290 Greenfield through May 25. Students will learn how to bathe a bed patient, dispense medication and take pulse and respiration. Lecture topics will include positioning and body mechanics, personal services for bed patients and changing bed linens and transfer activities. For more information call 968-2255.

*BETTERS listen up. The odds are 350 to 1 you are immune to cancer and 550 to 1 odds if you're under 55 and a non-smoker. That's because your body's immune system—which destroys mutated, potentially cancerous cells—is a continuous, ongoing process, but does diminish as old age approaches. This information thanks to Science Digest.

*OTHER SILLY THINGS from the desk of investigative reporter STANLEY BERNWOOD. While those persons who favor implementation of an equal rights amendment are feeling down lately, we can be rest assured that at least a little progress has been made over the centuries. Some Australian tribesmen believed they would lose weight if they stood in a woman's shadow.

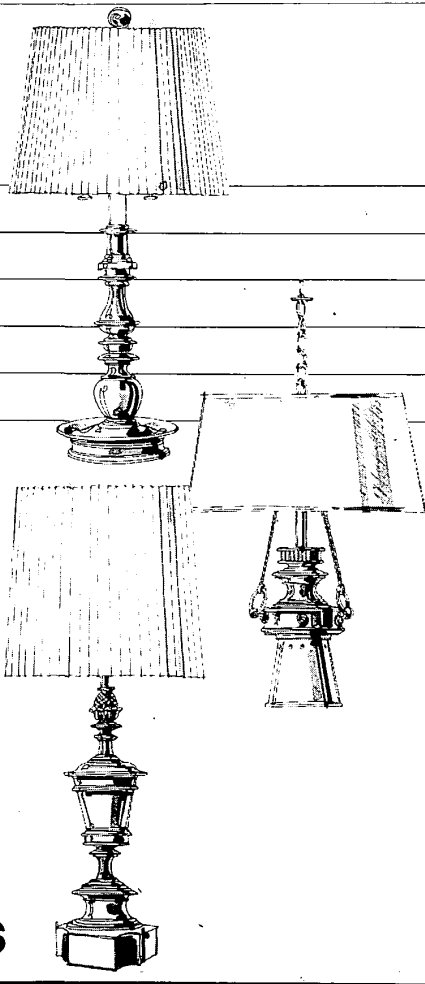
*SINCE YOU'RE thinking of planting a garden for the year, take this into consideration. It's believed that goldenrod growing near a house means that residents will have unexpected good fortune.

Don't forget about us. Drop a note to THE INSIDE ANGLE, P.O. BOX 69, SOUTHFIELD 4807. We'll be waiting to hear from you. Have a nice week.

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