A Thumbnail Sketch of Theatre Nursing

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INTRODUCTION

This book is intended primarily for student nurses entering the operating theatre for the first time. In unfamiliar surroundings, with people unrecognisably hidden behind caps and masks, instant indignation if the wrong thing is touched and none of the familiar ward routines, the new staff member is every bit as anxious as the patient!

This is not intended as a definitive textbook but rather as a good humoured guide for the student nurse during the initial phase of learning theatre routine.

For the text to flow smoothly, 'student nurse' also refers to trainee operating department assistant (ODA) and auxiliaries. Also for reasons of flow, not prejudice, the nurse is usually referred to as 'she', and the doctor as 'he'. The duties of trained nurses applies equally to trained ODAs.

The book is designed to fit into the theatre uniform and can be used as a reference easily available when the nurse feels too nervous to ask questions in a busy theatre suite. For more details and for specialist procedures the nurse should avail herself of further textbooks on the theatre bookshelf.

This book is written with a number of countries in mind, including Canada, the USA and the 'developing' ones. The descriptions of scrubbing up, gowning and gloving are detailed as the student nurse may need to refer to them when practising at home. Lists of instruments have been deliberately excluded as no two surgeons use the same, finance dictates what is purchased and names vary between countries.

We are as one in the common cause of improving patient care.

Kidlington, 1983

J.A.M.

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