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## DEVELOPMENT OF FORENSIC NURSING IN INDIA STEP BY STEP

Many new subspecialties are developing in the various scientific fields. Their introduction and development usually face same kind of problems. Same is true about forensic nursing. Forensic nursing started as specialty in USA and then it traveled to various parts of the world like Sweden, South Africa, Japan, Singapore and Malaysia. In India Virginia Lynch visited in Dec.2002. Introductory seminar was held in the Govt. Medical College, Patiala where doctors, nurses, Judges, advocates and police officials gathered together and they were introduced to the concept of forensic nursing and its utility to the investigating officers and the judiciary.

It was followed with similar lectures in the various parts of the Punjab. Many nursing schools and meetings of police officials were covered by Virginia Lynch and me.

Due to all these efforts forensic nursing was accepted in our part of the country. With the kind permission of Dr. Ravinder Singh our visionary dean, the nursing students of our local nursing school were taught forensic nursing at Govt. Medical College, Patiala. They started attending theory classes. They were also demonstrated postmortem examination, examination of injured persons as well as who were sexually assaulted. They were also demonstrated cases of poisoning. In all these cases special stress was laid on collection of samples, their preservation, packing and dispatch to the forensic science laboratory.

This thing continued at slow speed and then in 2003 an attempt was made at national level at Patna at the time of International congress of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology and XXIV Annual Conference of Forensic Medicine to popularize it by showing everybody the success which we had got in our state. Again an attempt was made during the ICFMT-2003 conference, New Delhi where invited lecture was delivered on forensic nursing to make the forensic fraternity aware about the movement of forensic nursing in India.

This aroused a great interest throughout India and we had many queries from different parts of the country which were suitably answered. As a result of this forensic nursing also started in AIIMS, New Delhi and some other places in India.

In the meantime Journal of Punjab Academy of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology also incorporated forensic nursing as one of the thrust areas. Two articles on forensic nursing were published in them. Later on these articles were online also as the journal became available online. Progress of forensic nursing was appreciated internationally by the publication of one article on forensic nursing "Bringing Hope to India" in the official publication of International Association of Forensic Nursing.

Now India is on the world map of forensic nursing. Dr.T.D. Dogra, Dr. Anil Aggarwal and I are the members of the global advisory panel of journal of forensic nursing being published from USA along with people from different parts of the world.

At the 4<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Punjab Academy of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology a concerted effort was made by dean of Govt. Medical College Dr. Kiranjeet Kaur to get it introduced in the syllabus of the B.Sc. Nursing by Baba Farid University of Health Sciences. At the same conference Vice chancellor of Baba Farid University of Health Sciences agreed in Principle to get it introduced in the syllabus of undergraduate nursing students. For this a project report was submitted to the university and was put in the faculty meeting of the university. We are hopeful that it will be introduced in the syllabus of the university shortly.

We had meetings with the higher police officials and with the attorneys regularly along with the district attorney so that there will not be any problem while implementing forensic nursing in the field

It was analyzed that why we had the slow progress as we started with the nursing students without any awareness being done for nursing faculty. This time awareness program of nursing faculty of local nursing college was carried out and we found there was greater acceptance of forensic nursing by students and teachers.

We had visiting scholars from the USA which also participated in these awareness programs. Cris Finn and Virginia Lynch helped in these awareness programs by telling them the importance and success stories of forensic nursing in the USA. It helped a lot in motivating nurses to join this stream.

Now we have a regular batch of nursing students attending the mortuary and emergency office of the forensic medicine and we hope this will become possible in other medical colleges and institutions.

We had the advantage that visiting scholars Jamie Ferrell Instructor of Clinical Nursing National Forensic Nursing Institute University of Rochester and Renae Diegel, Forensic Nurse Examiner/Program Director conducted the workshop on Rape victim Examination in the year 2006 and this also motivated people to accept the growing influence of forensic nursing in India

Continuing with this success story Baba Farid University of Health Sciences is going to hold another awareness program for the entire nursing faculty and police officers of the Punjab in the last week of February 2006.

If we take the success story of Punjab in introducing and developing forensic nursing in the state it can be role model for the development of forensic nursing anywhere in the world.

**Prof. R.K. Gorea**