

AN ACT TO REGULATE THE PRACTICE OF NURSING IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 877, June 19, 1953

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

ARTICLE I.—Title of Act

SECTION 1. Title of Act.—This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Nursing Law."

ARTICLE II.—Organization of the Board of Examiners for Nurses

SEC. 2. Name and composition of the Board.—The Board shall be known as the Board of Examiners for Nurses and shall be composed of a chairman and two members who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Civil Service from among registered nurses of recognized standing in the Philippines as may be certified by the officially recognized national association of nurses in the Philippines and possessing the qualifications prescribed in section four of this Act.

SEC. 3. Powers and duties of the Board.—The Board of Examiners for Nurses is vested with authority conformably with the provisions of this Act, to issue, suspend, revoke, or reissue certificates of registration for practice of nursing. The Board shall study the conditions affecting nursing education and the practice of the nursing profession in the Philippines, and shall exercise the powers conferred upon it by this Act with a view to the maintenance of an efficient ethical, technical, moral and professional standard in the practice of nursing. The Board shall likewise study and examine the facilities of hospitals or universities seeking permission to open new schools or colleges of nursing or departments of nursing education so as to see if the essential requirements therefor including qualified faculty and adequate budget are properly complied with. The authorization to open schools or colleges of nursing shall be based upon the written recommendation of the Board and the representative of the Government entity concerned with the granting of school permits or authorization.

The Board shall have the power to investigate violations of this Act and for this purpose, it may, under the hand of its chairman and seal of the Board, issue summons, subpoena or subpoena duces tecum to violators of this Act and witnesses thereof, and to compel their attendance. The Board shall from time to time look into the conditions affecting the practice of nursing in the Philippines and whenever necessary, recommend or adopt such measures as may be deemed proper for the advancement of the profession and for the vigorous enforcement of this Act.

SEC. 4. Qualifications of Board members.—The members of the Board shall, at the time of appointment:

- Be a citizen and resident of the Philippines;
- Be a registered nurse and a holder of the degree of Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Nursing or its equivalent, conferred by a reputable and legally constituted school, college or university, with either nursing education or public health nursing as major study;
- Be at least thirty years of age;

- Have had at least ten years of successful practice of the profession prior to appointment;
- Not be a member of the faculty of any school college or university during one year immediately preceding appointment as member of the Board of Examiners where undergraduate nursing is taught, nor have, directly or indirectly, any pecuniary interest in such institution.

SEC. 5. Term of office.—The members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three years or until their successors shall have been appointed and duly qualified; Provided, That the members of the first Board appointed under this Act shall hold office for the following terms: One member for one year, one member for two years, and one member for three years. Any vacancy occurring within the term of a member shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term only. Each member of the Board shall qualify by taking the proper oath of office prior to entering upon the performance of his or her duties.

SEC. 6. Executive officer and secretary of the Board.—The Commissioner of Civil Service shall be the Executive Officer of the Board. The Secretary of the Boards of Examiners appointed under Republic Act Numbered Five hundred forty-six shall also be the Secretary of the Board of Examiners for Nurses. All records and minutes of the deliberations of the Board, including examination papers, shall be kept by the Bureau of Civil Service under the direct custody of the secretary.

SEC. 7. Compensation of the Board members.—The members of the Board shall each receive as compensation a fee not exceeding ten pesos per capita of the candidates examined.

SEC. 8. Removal of Board members.—The President of the Philippines may, upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Civil Service, remove any member of the Board for continued neglect of duty or incompetency, for commission or toleration of irregularities in the examination, or for unprofessional or dishonorable conduct, after having given the member concerned an opportunity to defend herself or himself in a proper administrative investigation.

SEC. 9. Rules and regulations.—The Board may, subject to the approval of the President of the Philippines, promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. Annual report.—The Board shall submit an annual report to the President of the Philippines after the close of each fiscal year, giving a detailed account of the proceedings of the Board during the year and embodying such recommendations as the Board may desire to make.

ARTICLE III.—Provisions Regarding Nursing Schools and Colleges

SEC. 11. Purpose of school or college of nursing.—Schools and colleges of nursing should be established for the preparation of qualified applicants for the profession of nursing, and should be operated as educational institutions.

SEC. 12. Budget and facilities.—Provisions should be made for adequate budget for the school or college of nursing and for adequate library, classrooms, and teaching equipment and supplies.

SEC. 13. Clinical and public health nursing facilities.— No hospital, college or university shall be permitted to operate a school or college of nursing unless provision is made by such hospital or university for at least one hundred beds to be available at all times for occupation by medical (including communicable), surgical, obstetric and pediatric patients. Provisions for student's experience in the field of public health nursing should likewise be made with community health agencies.

Colleges or universities offering courses to nurses-graduates of the three-year hospital course should also make necessary provisions for additional experience of students either in hospitals or in public health nursing depending

on their major study.

SEC. 14. Qualifications of faculty members.—The director of the school or the dean of the college of nursing should be a qualified nurse with the following minimum qualifications;

- Must be a holder of a bachelor's degree in nursing a nursing education major;
- Must have had at least three years of acceptable experience in teaching and supervision in schools or colleges of nursing;
- Must be a registered nurse; and
- Must be a Filipino citizen.

The instructors in nursing arts and in clinical nursing courses should be registered nurses with the following minimum qualifications:

- Must be holders of the bachelor's degree in nursing;
- Must have majored in the particular subject or subjects which they teach;
- Must have had at least a year of acceptable experience as head nurses in a hospital.

The instructor in public health nursing should be a nurse with the following minimum qualifications:

- Must be a holder of a bachelor's degree in nursing, and a major in public health nursing;
- Must have had at least six months of acceptable experience in generalized public health nursing; and
- Must be a registered nurse.

SEC. 15. General entrance requirements to schools and colleges of nursing.—Applicants desiring to enter any hospital school of nursing must show evidence of completion of at least one year of college work in a recognized educational institution. Courses studied should include: Chemistry, Zoology, English, Spanish, Psychology, Social Science and Sociology. Provided, however, That the foregoing provision should not be so construed as to prejudice the setting up of additional requirements by individual schools and colleges of nursing or preclude the offering of said courses in four years integrated programs in colleges of nursing.

ARTICLE IV.—Examination and registration of nurses

SEC. 16. Inhibition against practice of nursing.—Unless exempt from registration, no person shall practice or offer to practice nursing in the Philippines as defined in this Act, without holding a valid certificate of registration as nurse issued by the Board of Examiners for Nurses: Provided, however, That for the protection of life and the promotion of health, or for the prevention of illness and any communicable disease, any person practicing or offering to practice professional nursing in the Philippines must submit evidence that he or she is qualified so to practice, and shall be licensed as hereinafter provided.

SEC. 17. Scope of practice of nursing.—A person shall be deemed to be practicing professional nursing, within the meaning and intent of this Act who shall, for a fee, salary, or other reward, or compensation perform professional services requiring an understanding of the principles and application of procedures and techniques of nursing based on biological, physical and social sciences, including the undertaking of responsible supervision of a patient requiring skill in observation of symptoms and reaction, causes and effects and engaging as nursing instructor in schools and colleges of nursing: Provided, however, That this provision shall not apply to students in schools and colleges of nursing who perform nursing services under supervision of their instructors and professors of nursing

and to exchange professors of nursing.

SEC. 18. Holding of examination.—Examination for candidates desiring to practice nursing in the Philippines shall be given by the Board on the last Monday of April and October of each year in Manila or at such other place as may be deemed necessary and expedient by the Board subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Civil Service and the President of the Philippines.

SEC. 19. Examination required.—Except as otherwise permitted under the provisions of this Act, all applicants for registration for the practice of nursing shall be required to undergo an examination as provided for in this Act.

SEC. 20. Qualifications of applicants.—In order to be admitted to the nurse examination, an applicant must, at the time of filing his or her application therefor, establish to the satisfaction of the Board that:

- He or she is a citizen of the Philippines, or a foreigner: Provided, That the country of which he or she is a subject or citizen permits Filipino nurses to practice within its territorial limits on the same basis as the subject or citizen of such country and, Provided, further, That the requirements for admission to nursing school and for graduation as nurse in said country are substantially the same as those provided under this Act;
- He or she is at least twenty-one years of age;
- He or she is in good health and is of good moral character;
- He or she had finished a standard academic high school course or its equivalent in a school, institute, college or university legally established and duly recognized by the Government;
- He or she has received a diploma as graduate in nursing, bachelor of nursing or bachelor of science in nursing from an institution, college, or university duly accredited and legally constituted in which the following branches are taught: biological and physical science including anatomy and physiology, microbiology and chemistry, social sciences including psychology, sociology, and social problems of nursing, history of nursing and professional adjustments; medical sciences including medicine, communicable diseases, surgery, orthopedic, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, urology, eye, ear, nose and throat, mental health and psychiatry, introduction to medical sciences and pharmacology and therapeutics; nursing and allied arts including nursing arts, medical nursing, communicable disease nursing, surgical nursing, orthopedic nursing, pediatric nursing, obstetric nursing, gynecological nursing, eye, ear, nose, and throat nursing, psychiatric nursing, nutrition, cookery and diet therapy, and public health nursing; and humanities including English.

SEC. 21. Scope of examination.—The examination for the practice of nursing in the Philippines shall consist of a written test, the scope of which shall be determined and prescribed by the Board taking into consideration the teaching plan of all the schools legally constituted in the Philippines. It shall be the duty of the Board to prepare the schedule of subjects of the examination, which shall include medical nursing, surgical nursing, obstetrical nursing, nursing of children, communicable disease nursing public health nursing, professional adjustments, nutrition and diet therapy, and general nursing procedures, with the following subjects integrated in the examination: anatomy and physiology, microbiology, mental health, pharmacology and therapeutics, introduction to nursing arts, English and social foundations of nursing and to submit the same to the President of the Philippines for approval through the Commissioner of Civil Service and to publish the same as approved at least two months before the date of the examination wherein they are to be used. Any alteration or amendment that may be made in said schedule shall likewise be approved by the President of the Philippines.

SEC. 22. Ratings in the examination.—In order to pass the first examination, a candidate must obtain a general rating, of seventy-five per cent in the written test, with no rating below sixty per cent in any subject. An applicant

who fails in the first examination but obtained seventy-five per cent in each of at least five of the subjects may be permitted to take a second examination on the subjects in which examinee obtained below seventy-five per cent within one year from the date of first examination. In order to pass in the second examination, the candidate must obtain seventy-five per cent in each of the repeated subjects : Provided, That an applicant who failed again in the set of subjects repeated in the second examination must take re-examination on all subjects within one year from the date of the second re-examination: Provided, further, That should he or she still fail in this second re-examination, the applicant shall be required to pursue a prescribed course of study and to show proof of the completion of such course before he or she will be admitted to a fourth examination.

SEC. 23. Report of results of examination.—The Board of Examiners for Nurses shall, within one hundred twenty days after the examination, report the ratings obtained by each candidate to the Commissioner of Civil Service, who shall with his recommendation, submit such ratings to the President of the Philippines for approval.

SEC. 24. Issuance of certificates.—Certificates of registration as nurse shall be issued to any applicant who passes the examination after approval of her ratings by the President of the Philippines and upon payment of required fees. Every certificate of registration shall the full name of the registrant, have a serial number, bear the signatures of the members of the Board, attested by the Secretary of the Board and duly authenticated by the official seal of the Board of Examiners for Nurses.

The issuance of a certificate of registration by the Board to the registrant shall be evidence that the person named therein is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a registered nurse until said certificate, for just cause, is revoked temporarily or cancelled.

SEC. 25. Registration by reciprocity.—Certificate of registration may be issued without examination to nurses registered under the laws of any foreign state or country; Provided, That the requirements for the registration or licensing of nurses in said foreign state or country, are substantially the same as those required and contemplated by this Act: And provided, further, That the laws of such state or country grant the same privileges to registered nurses in the Philippines on the same basis as the subjects or citizens of such foreign state or country.

SEC. 26. Fees for examination and registration.—Applicants for examination for the profession of nursing shall pay an examination fee of thirty pesos. Successful applicants shall pay a registration fee of ten pesos.

SEC. 27. Refusal to issue certificates in certain cases.— The Board of Examiners for Nurses shall refuse to issue a certificate of registration to any person convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction of any criminal offense involving moral turpitude, and to any person guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct. The Board shall give the applicant a written statement setting forth the reason or reasons for its action, which statement shall be incorporated in the records of the Board.

SEC. 28. Revocation and suspension of certificates.—The Board shall also have the power to revoke or suspend the validity of a certificate of registration of a nurse for any of the causes mentioned in the preceding section, or for unprofessional conduct, malpractice, incompetency, or serious ignorance or negligence in the practice of nursing for making use of fraud, deceit or false statements to obtain a certificate of registration.

SEC 29. Reissue of revoked certificate and replacement of lost certificate.—The Board may, for reasons of equity and justice, and upon proper application therefor, issue another copy of the certificate, original or duplicate, upon payment of ten pesos.

A new certificate of registration to replace any certificate lost, destroyed or mutilated may be issued subject to the rules of the Board and upon payment of ten pesos.

ARTICLE V.—Sundry Provisions Relative to the Practice of Nursing

SEC. 30. Prohibition in the practice of nursing—Penal provisions.—Any person who shall practice nursing in the Philippines within the meaning of this Act, without a certificate of registration issued in accordance with the provisions of this Act, or without having been declared exempt for examination and registration, or any person presenting or using as his or her own the certificate of registration of another, or any person giving any false or forged evidence to the Board in order to obtain a certificate of registration, or any person using a revoked or suspended certificate of registration, or any person assuming, using or advertising as a registered nurse, or appending to his or her name the letters R.N. or B.S.N. without having been conferred such title or degree in a legally constituted school, college, university, or board of examiners duly authorized to confer the same, or advertising any title or description tending to convey the impression that she is a nurse e.g. using the nurses' uniform and cap without holding a valid certificate of registration from the Board, or any person violating any provision of this Act, shall be guilty of misdemeanor and shall upon conviction, be sentenced to a fine of not less than one thousand pesos nor more than five thousand pesos or to suffer imprisonment for a period of not less than one year nor than five years, or both in the discretion of the court.

SEC. 31. Enforcement of this Act by officers of the law.- It shall be the duty of all duly constituted officers of the law of the National Government or any provincial city or municipal government, to enforce the provisions of this Act and to prosecute any person violating the same.

SEC. 32. All laws, parts of the laws, orders, ordinances, or regulations in conflict with the provisions of this Act, as pertain to nursing education and practice shall be, and are hereby repealed.

SEC. 33. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, June 19, 1953.

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