

A Comic of Germ Protection



Left to right
Caroline Martinson, RN, MDS Coordinator - DMV Chapter Treasurer
Jemima Kodua RNBSN, MSN, DNP - DMV Chapter President
Joyce Blaboe, MSN, RN - DMV Chapter Secretary

The 2020 Year of the Nurse and Midwife in the Midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)

As Nursing and Midwifery globally celebrates this year 2020 as declared by the World Health Assembly (WHA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) as the year of the Nurse and the Midwife, unfolding events globally on the emerging pandemic (Covid-19) has set us into deep reflections on our roles as nurses and midwives in Global Health Security. The foundations of modern nursing and certainly Public Health Nursing was built on health care challenges such as we find ourselves today. These events prompted the search of profound knowledge to guide nursing practice.

We remember Florence Nightingale for her concepts on the importance of the environment in the healing process; Betty Neuman's Systems Model which describes the person as a complete system with interrelated parts that thrives to maintain balance and harmony between internal and external environment by adjusting to stress and defending against tension-producing stimuli.

In these challenging times, it will be prudent that our committed and dedicated nursing and midwifery professionals in Ghana stick to the three (3) basic principles of nursing and midwifery as proposed by Fuerst and Wolf as a strategy at the nursing and midwifery front towards the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic.

The Ministry of Health and all the Nursing and Midwifery leadership in Ghana stand in solidarity with the hardworking and dedicated Nurses, Midwives and other frontline health workers in Ghana against the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (covid-19) which has been declared as a global pandemic.

We want to take this opportunity in these challenging times to express our sincere gratitude to our Nurses and Midwives for their ongoing efforts and dedication as frontline workers in this global pandemic.

We are confident of the commitment, dedication and hard work that nursing and midwifery professionals and will urge all to document events. These documentations will provide good data for analysis to inform future practice.

AND IN GENERAL, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO AVOID CROWDS, BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHO MIGHT BE SICK.

People who are infected can show no symptoms, but are still **INFECTIOUS**.

Maybe she's not sick, just protecting herself.

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HOWEVER, SOMETIMES A SICK PERSON'S SALIVA CAN GET ON OTHER THINGS...

DIGITAL DEVICES, DOOR KNOBS, PENS, MOUSE, TISSUE, CUPS, LIFT BUTTONS, STAIR BANISTERS.

> EVEN ON THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR FACE MASK

HEALTHY PERSON

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AND IF YOU TOUCH ANY OF THESE THINGS BY ACCIDENT, AND THEN TOUCH YOUR FACE,

RUB EYES

OR YOUR LOVED ONES FACE

YOU MIGHT ALL FALL SICK.

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VIRUSES CAN LAST FOR UP TO 48 HOURS ON OBJECTS,

AND THE ONLY EFFECTIVE WAY TO GET RID OF THEM IS TO WASH THEM OFF WITH SOAP.

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WHICH IS WHY IT IS ALSO GOOD TO FOLLOW THESE

5

PRECAUTIONS

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1 WASH YOUR HANDS THOROUGHLY WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS AFTER TOUCHING A SUSPECTED CONTAMINATED SURFACE

WASH WITH SOAP UP TO HERE

ELBOW

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WHAT IS THOROUGHLY?

WASH THE BACK OF YOUR HANDS

BETWEEN THE FINGERS

UNDER THE NAILS

FOR 20 SECONDS

ENOUGH TIME TO SING "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" TWICE

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2 COVER YOUR COUGH WITH A DISPOSABLE TISSUE OR USE MASK AND DISCARD THEM IMMEDIATELY IN A WASTE BIN. DON'T WEAR THE MASK FOR MORE THAN A DAY.

BACTERIA GROWS ON THE INSIDES OF YOUR MASK IF YOU WEAR THEM TOO LONG

IF YOU DID, DON'T WORRY, JUST WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AFTER

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3 AVOID COMING INTO CONTACT WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK OR SHARE THE PERSONAL ITEMS, FOOD, UTENSILS, CUPS & TOWELS

EVERYONE GETS THEIR OWN TOWEL

4 AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYE, EARS AND NOSE

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AND FINALLY,

5 SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE IF YOU ARE SICK

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STAY SAFE, EVERYONE!

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The government through international, public and private support has made available Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to our frontline health workers dealing with the pandemic. The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Ghana in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and University of Ghana offered training on how to use the PPEs via Facebook live streaming to the nursing and midwifery practitioners in Ghana. Notwithstanding, we use this opportunity to also request hospitals, agencies, benevolent individuals and organizations to complement the effort of the government to obtain the needed PPEs for our gallant nurses and midwives so they can provide the needed care and also protect themselves.

The Ministry of Health has also made available special life insurance cover for 10,000 health personnel and allied health professionals attending to COVID-19 pandemic response.

At the Nursing and Midwifery Council we are focused on playing our part in the actions needed to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic. This means maintaining our role to secure in the public interest the highest standards of training, education and practice of nursing and midwifery is of prime importance.

We have also established a Coronavirus information resource centre at the Council for Nurse Assistants, Nurses and Midwives to share information on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lastly, we reiterate that the Ministry of Health and all the Nursing and Midwifery leadership pledge to work collaboratively to support a co-ordinated national effort in the battle to contain the spread of this serious infection.

God bless us all and make us great and strong.

Thank you

Mr. Felix Nyante

Registrar of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Ghana



What You Need to Know About Coronavirus

What is Novel Coronavirus?

The 2019 novel coronavirus disease is a new type of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, China. The name of this disease has been abbreviated to COVID-19. It is part of the family of viruses that cause the common cold and results in a range of flu-like symptoms.

Should I get tested?

We know many people are wondering, if they have fever and a cough, do they need to get tested for COVID-19? Testing is currently prioritized for people with underlying health conditions or serious illness. Testing may become more readily available in the future, but, for now, if you have mild symptoms (cough, fever), you need to stay home, stay away from people. A test, whether it's positive or negative, won't change that advice!

Who is most at risk for getting COVID-19?

The elderly (60 and over) and those with underlying health care conditions, like hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer, are at most risk of developing the disease.

While fatalities are highest in people over 85 years old, catching COVID-19 can result in hospitalization and admission to an intensive care unit for a range of ages, it said. Of the more than 500 people known to be hospitalized, 18% were 45-54 years and 20% were aged 20-44 years.

What are the symptoms?

The COVID-19 coronavirus causes a lower respiratory tract illness. Symptoms can appear anywhere between 2 to 14 days after exposure.

Common symptoms are: **Cough, Fever, Shortness of breath**

Less common symptoms may include: **Body aches, Chills, Diarrhea, Fatigue, Headache, Runny nose, Sore throat**

In general, people should adhere to appropriate transmission-based isolation precautions that apply to many respiratory viruses including influenza and other coronaviruses.

The CDC does recommend face masks for people who have symptoms of COVID-19, as well as for health care workers and others who may be caring for them.

People with upper respiratory tract infections (colds) should:

- Notify your PCP. Stay at home · Drink plenty of fluids · Avoid touching face
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze in your upper sleeve or elbow
- Wash their hands for 20 seconds. If water is not available, use hand sanitizer
- Stay 6 feet away from people and other household members
- Keep clean environment, using sanitizing wipes on surfaces
- Use disposable utensils if possible. Avoid sharing used utensils, plates, dishes
- Use a household wipe or spray to disinfect doorknobs, light switches, desks, keyboards, sinks, toilets, cell phones, and other objects and surfaces that are frequently touched
- **Call 911 if you have severe difficulty breathing**

My Soul Has a Hat by Mario de Andrade

This lovely poem was written by Mario de Andrade (San Paolo 1893-1945) Poet, novelist, essayist and musicologist. He was one of the founders of Brazilian modernism.

MY SOUL HAS A HAT

I counted my years and realized
that I have

Less time to live by,
Than I have lived so far.

I feel like a child who won a pack
of candies: at first he ate them with
pleasure,

But when he realized that there
was little left, he began to taste
them intensely.

I have no time for endless
meetings where the statutes,
rules, procedures & internal
regulations are discussed,
knowing that nothing will be done.

I no longer have the patience
To stand absurd people who,
despite their chronological age,
have not grown up.

My time is too short:
I want the essence,
my spirit is in a hurry.
I do not have much candy
In the package anymore.

Resources Available

2-1-1 COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic

<http://www.211.org/services/covid19>

- Information on Frequently Asked Questions
- Available Resources (testing, home internet access, small business help, unemployment benefits, mortgage/rent/utilities, food, etc.)

CDC (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/index.html>

- Information on how to protect yourself/family, testing, schools, travel, etc.

Schools Food Programs

- Contact your local school district for contingency plans for food programs if your child/children were receiving school breakfast and lunch.
- Most school districts have established grab and go pick up sites to accommodate.
- If you are under quarantine and can't leave the home, call the district to see what arrangements can be made for delivery.

Managing Stress & Anxiety

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

https://www.ptsd.va.gov/covid/COVID_managing_stress.asp

<https://www.mindful.org/how-mindfulness-can-help-you-navigate-the-coronavirus-panic/>

EAP- Employee Assistance Programs

- Stress, financial assistance, local resources, childcare, legal, etc.
- Assistance often for any member of the household. Review for referrals to specific EAP vendors.

Child Care

<https://www.childcareaware.org/>

- Providing the latest information to help families during the COVID-19 crisis

Older Adults & Those with Disabilities

<https://acl.gov/COVID-19>

- Links to each state's Department of Public Health

I want to live next to humans,
very realistic people who know
How to laugh at their mistakes,
Who are not inflated by their own
triumphs
and who take responsibility for their
actions.

In this way, human dignity is
defended
and we live in truth and honesty.

It is the essentials that make life
useful.

I want to surround myself with
people
who know how to touch the hearts
of those whom hard strokes of life
have learned to grow, with sweet
touches of the soul.

Yes, I'm in a hurry.
I'm in a hurry to live with the
intensity that only maturity can give.
I do not intend to waste any of the
remaining desserts.

I am sure they will be exquisite,
much more than those eaten so far.
My goal is to reach the end satisfied
and at peace with my loved ones
and my conscience.

We have two lives
and the second begins when you
realize you only have one.

Ghana Independence Day Celebration

The Ghana Independence Day Celebration on March 6th, 2020 was held in style in Washington, D.C. NAGNF had the honor and pleasure of being the Medical Response Team for the occasion. Even at short notice, the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia (DMV) Chapter quickly mobilized resources and represented our Foundation in style.



Left to right
Joyce Blaboe, RN...Dr. Jemima Kodua...Gifty Lano, RN, NAGNF President
Sitting - Mrs Dinah Adjei-Barwuah - 1st Lady Ghana-US Ambassador and NAGNF Collaborator



The team led by Dr. Jemima Kodua, the DMV Chapter President was phenomenal. In attendance at the event was the Ghana Ambassador to the US, Honorable Baffour Adjei-Barwuah and his wife, Mrs Dinah Adjei-Barwuah, a NAGNF collaborator.



Left to right
Joyce Blaboe, RN...Caroline Martinson, RN...Gifty Lano, RN, NAGNF President...
Dr. Jemima Kodua, DMV Chapter President
Sitting - Hon. Baffour Adjei-Barwuah - Ghana Ambassador to the US

Also present were several members and leaders of NAGNF including Mrs Gifty Lano, our NAGNF President. The event allowed attendees to become familiar with the vision and mission of NAGNF.

President's Corner

Hello colleagues, I bring you NAGNF greetings. In this time of extreme measures due to the Covid 19 virus pandemic, we are experiencing shortage of supplies i.e. gloves, masks, sanitizers etc. in our workplaces. As such, facilities have employed new strict conservation measures that we, as healthcare workers have never seen before at least not in a prosperous nation such as the USA. What seemed previously abundant and readily available is suddenly now under lock and key requiring signatures for their release and use. Who would have thought that we no longer only count and sign for narcotics, but we are now signing for cleaning materials, masks and gowns? I've heard recent reports of hospital staff using single use disposable masks for a week and others improvising with cloth sown masks from the sewing community. "Necessity is really the mother of invention". Now, this is unprecedented with respect to our normative "everything is readily available all the time" culture. These measures are now our new reality in our very prosperous highly developed nation. The impact on us frontline healthcare workers is perturbing. However, as concerning as it is, we are also comforted that it is temporary and will revert back to our plentiful norm soon.

With this in mind, I am compelled to think about our beloved Ghana where shortage of resources is a norm for the Ghanaian healthcare worker. We all have heard and seen reports of a constant lack of very vital resources in the Ghanaian healthcare system. If what we now experience in our practice here in the USA, is the everyday norm for the Ghanaian nurse, then as a professional group, it is imperative that we explore these very pertinent impactful practice questions;

- How does the Ghanaian nurse do it?
- What are the ethical dilemmas the Ghanaian nurse have to endure in their professional practice?
- What adaptations have the Ghanaian nurse employed to manage the delivery of safe healthcare?
- How safe is the Ghanaian nurse in the daily execution of their practice?

Finally,

- How do we, as a professional diaspora group support nursing practice in Ghana?

We must appreciate that successfully addressing these questions require collaboration. Therefore, it is imperative that we join hands with our counterparts and work on our strategic plans with an ultimate goal to drive innovative sustainable solutions that positively impact healthcare delivery, given the existing conditions in Ghana. As a national professional nursing group, we are well on course and this era makes it all the more imperative to continue with our plans. We continue to;

- grow our relationship with the nursing leadership in Ghana,
- establish and grow chapters
- grow relationships with the other recognized healthcare stakeholders.

Most recently, a notable win is a request from the Ghana Consulate in Washington, DC to set up and man a health stand during the March 6 independence celebrations at the embassy. Our DMV chapter led by president, Dr. Jemima Kodua, secretary Ms. Joyce Otukuor Blabboe and treasurer, Ms. Caroline Matinson successfully responded to the call. Such recognition is the power of our union and moves us closer to our goals.

Gifty Lano, RN , BSN
NAGNF President



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