



GUYANA NEWS

## Nursing school records 80.5% failure rate

By [Marcelle Thomas](#) March 31, 2012

Even as the Guyana School of Nursing prepares to more students come early next month, many are expressing concern at the staggering 80.5% failure rate among its last batch.

Senior Georgetown Public Hospital (GPH) personnel and officials of Guyana Nurses Association expressed alarm at the high failure rate of the last batch of nurses from Georgetown, Linden and Berbice.

“When objections were raised about the size of the classes and many other issues, the Minister of Health blatantly said more will be trained, without addressing any of issues put forward to him. Now look what we have and it will be more problems because they will meet the new batch coming in April. Heaven help the health sector!” said an official from the school, who requested anonymity but shared the results to Stabroek News.

Echoing what the school official said were President of the GNA Joan Stewart and a lecturer of the school. Stewart told this newspaper that



majoring and excelling, well except for those from Linden, possibly because their lecturer died during the course.

They also do not have as many practicals as students in Georgetown and Berbice. This, she said, was because of population size and daily patient intake. GPH records the highest percentage of patient intake.

One of the theory lecturers of the school, who also requested anonymity, bemoaned the conditions under which she had to work. She opined that the failure rate of the trainee nurses was the result of the student/tutor ratio, where one lecturer had to sometimes teach over 80 students.

She noted also that classes went on in sweltering heat because of poor ventilation. "They can twist it, turn it, look at it sideways; bottom line is there are just too many students for the number of lecturers. You cannot give your all because you are split into just too many pieces and it's the students who suffer most, because their time, money and energy are wasted."

It was noted during the marking of examinations that basic terms and concepts were not understood by the students, who sometimes gave "pathetic" responses to questions posed. "Can you believe that there are nurses who tell you proudly that they want to be midwives and do not know how to measure an expectant mother's dilating cervix? Some say they have the world of CXC's and it would shock you to hear some of the things that come out of their mouths; much less what they write on paper," the lecturer said.



Stewart informed that another batch of students was admitted and will begin classes in April. She said it was scary to think of what will happen when the students who failed are grouped with the new trainees.

She had previously been very vocal about the large numbers and frequent intake of trainee nurses, along with other medical training maladies, which she said would have an adverse effect on the overall quality of healthcare in Guyana and how local nurses would be perceived overseas.

She said the GNA plans to engage Chief Medical Officer, Dr Shamdeo Persaud, to address the student issue along with the recent pronouncement by the Ministry of Health that newly-trained nurses will be attending to prisoners of the Georgetown Prison.

Stewart said nurses had lodged complaints since they feel they are not equipped, having no training in psychology, to deal with sometimes hardened criminals. She feels also that the nurses, particularly the women, will be at risk being subjected to "walking through a prison with men who for many years would not have seen a woman and would be calling out to them in some of the names I won't even mention."

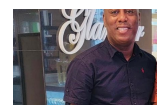
The Guyana Public Service Union had last month given the Ministry of Health one month to address a number of issues pertaining to the deterioration of nurses' training, including overcrowding in the classrooms and wards, poor training facilities, short lunch periods and poor bathroom facilities among others. That deadline is up today.





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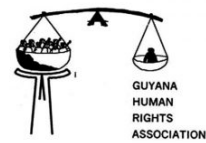
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