

Your Part in Civilian Defense

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YOU CAN SERVE your country best by doing what you are best prepared to do—*nursing*.¹ In order to preserve our national life in its normal state as nearly as we can, every citizen should carry on his regular job, so far as possible. In addition, those who are able will be needed to do something more. Here are suggestions for the “something more” which you—a nurse—can do:

1. Discover what is being done for defense in your community by consulting your health officer, chamber of commerce, local Red Cross chapter, superintendent of schools, or your local defense council.

2. Find out the location of your local defense council, the name of its director, the local chief of emergency medical service, and the names of the advisory board, including the nursing representative.

3. Get in touch with the nursing representative on the local defense council and ask what you can do. If no nursing representative has been appointed, consult the local chief of emergency medical service.

4. Find out if a nursing defense council has been established in your community. If so, ask how you can participate. There is important work to be done by your nursing council. It should evaluate nursing services in the light of war-time conditions; analyze local needs and make plans for meeting them; enlist the services of every able-bodied nurse for some phase of defense nursing; con-

duct a vigorous public information program; recruit more student nurses; assist the Red Cross and the Office of Civilian Defense in training volunteer nurse's aides; obtain the active support of civic leaders, organizations, and local government officials in the nursing program in defense.

5. If a local nursing council has not been established, get in touch with the secretary of your district nurses association for assistance in establishing one. If she cannot be reached, write to the secretary of your state nurses association. Her address is published in every issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*, Official Directory, back advertising pages.

6. Find out whether your local hospital has organized emergency field medical units. Volunteer to serve in one of these units if needed. The Office of Civilian Defense recommends that every hospital organize emergency units to be ready to give first aid treatment at the scene of a local incident or disaster when called.

7. Encourage suitable women in your community to volunteer at the local Red Cross chapter for training in the Volunteer Nurse's Aide Corps. Hospitals need many nurses' aides *immediately*.

8. Take a Red Cross first-aid course, if you have not had one within three years. Apply to your local Red Cross chapter for instruction. If no instructor is available, any physician can be certified as an instructor on application to your local Red Cross chapter. Many hospitals and nursing schools have qualified first-aid instructors on their staffs.

9. According to present regulations, nurses qualify as first-aid instructors by taking the advanced and instructor's Red Cross course following the preliminary

¹ If you can qualify for the Army or Navy Nurse Corps, and can be spared from your present job, ask your local Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service how to apply, or your Area Director of Red Cross Nursing Service. See the Official Directory in the *American Journal of Nursing*, for the latter address.

course. Ask your local Red Cross. If there is no local Red Cross write to your Area Director of Red Cross Nursing Service. Her name and address are listed in the Official Directory of every *American Journal of Nursing*. The Office of Civilian Defense recommends that one person in every home and one out of every five workers in industry take a first-aid course unless he has had one recently.

10. Ask your local Red Cross whether teachers in home nursing are needed in your community. If so, apply to the local Red Cross chapter for authorization to teach these courses. See what you can do to organize them in your community. If there is no local Red Cross, write to your Area Director of Red Cross Nursing Service. See Official Directory, *American Journal of Nursing*, for name and address.

11. Assume responsibility for recruiting at least one well-qualified young woman to enter an accredited school of nursing. Qualifications include at least graduation from high school, good health, pleasing personality. Prepare yourself for this recruiting job by getting copies of *Nursing and How To Prepare for It*, and *Nursing a Profession for the College Graduate*, from the Nursing Information Bureau, 1790 Broadway, New York City. Single copies are free. The Secretary of the State Board of Nurse Examiners can advise on accredited nursing schools in your area. Her address is given in the Official Directory of the *American Journal of Nursing* every month.

12. If you are ineligible for Army or Navy nursing service, ask about enrol-

ment for some other kind of Red Cross Nursing Service.

13. If you are not now in active nursing and have the time, prepare yourself to give part- or full-time volunteer or paid nursing service. Ask at your local hospital, health department, or visiting nurse service about a refresher course or special experience. If you cannot take a special course, ask locally what you *can* do.

14. If you are connected with a hospital or public health nursing organization, assure yourself that the jobs which can be done by volunteers have been listed with the local volunteer bureau and the qualifications of volunteers for these jobs stated.

15. Inform yourself what you should tell your patients about what to do in case of emergency. In the hospital you will get this information from the superintendent of nurses or her assistants. In the public health nursing agency, you will get it from the director of the nursing service or your supervisor. Your patients have confidence in you. They respect the instructions and advice which you give them. In general, people should be told that it is safer to scatter than to collect in crowds; that if they are at home, they should stay at home; that if they are not at home, they should seek safe shelter at once.

Every able-bodied nurse can contribute most through her professional service. Every able-bodied nurse can do "something more" in her spare time. Above all else, be cheerful, allay apprehension, inspire confidence.