

In Retrospect

Evolving Role of Capitol Nurses

Insight into the changing role of Capitol nurses after September 11th.

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I have vivid memories of the Capitol and sitting out in the hallway, handing out Cipro and checking people's names off, and oh, my. But you know what? It brought the nurses together, because we worked so well as a team. It, it really opened the doors to the nurses participating even more in emergency preparation. You know, in years past, before I was even a nurse there, you know, the Attending Physician would always be present for, like, the concerts on Fourth of July and Memorial Day and so forth, and it would be the corpsmen that would be tasked to be there. And after 9/11, things changed, and then they wanted nurses there, as well. And I think it is just an evolution of the management of the Attending Physicians. Seeing the role of the nurse as being more than just taking care of, you know, the minor emergencies or whatever that would come through the regular health units, you know. The Band-Aids, the cuts, the chest pains, that kind of thing, and they saw the nurses having a greater role, and for the nursing profession, and those nurses that work the Capitol, that's a great thing, a great thing, that they have that confidence in us that we have the, the knowledge and the skills to, to respond to emergencies, whether it's, you know, a bioterrorist attack, or, or a bombing, or you know, just even, you know, any emergency that happens within the Capitol. The nurses are, are an integral part of the team, and it's really a wonderful thing to watch and see, and know that it's developed into that, you know?