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Feature article

“Til Death Do Us Part?”™ The Nurse’s Role in the Care of the Dead: A Historical Perspective: 1850–2004

Cynthia Ann Blum MSN, RN

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In the immediate hours after a person takes his or her last breath, the nurse has always been present. In the hospital or at home, under hospice care or without warning, the nurse is frequently the last to hold the hand of those transitioning from life to death. The nurse, in assuring the patient and family a peaceful transition, finds her role to include caring for the body with reverence to the religious and cultural concerns that the patient holds sacred.



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CINDY BLUM, MSN, RN, is a clinical instructor at Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, Florida Atlantic University, and a PhD student in their doctoral program.

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