


Navigating the Global Nursing Shortage: Collaborative Strategies for Education and Mobility

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Globally, nursing is a vital profession that contributes to the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities. However, as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, there continues to be a global nursing shortage. Even before the pandemic, there was a shortage of nurses that varied considerably between countries (Drennan & Ross, 2019). Back in 2016, the World Health Organization (2016) predicted a shortfall of 7.6 million nurses by 2030, with the most severe impact in low- and middle-income countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the shortage of nurses (ICN, 2022).

There are many factors contributing to the global nursing shortage. Addressing the global nursing shortage requires collaboration between academic and practice partners to educate, support, and retain nurses in the workforce. This will involve increasing the total number of nursing graduates each year and improving the capacity to hire and retain those graduates (WHO, 2020). Therefore, investing in nursing education and nursing professional development is essential to increase the supply and quality of nurses, and to have a positive impact on the retention and satisfaction of nurses (Drennan & Ross, 2018). It will also include working together to assist global mobility. In this editorial, I would like to further discuss working together to support nursing education and global mobility.

The nursing workforce in many countries is becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse because of global mobility (Juntunen et al., 2024). Nurse educators in academic and practice settings play a role in facilitating the success of this diverse nursing workforce. To ensure patient safety and improve patient care, it is essential that this diverse nursing workforce is competent to work, in both their country of origin and the new country. To facilitate the assessment of nursing

competence across countries, nursing curricula must provide the resources and structure to support global mobility (Juntunen et al., 2024). As there is variability in nursing curriculum, nursing licensure within country, and recognition of nursing licensure from other countries, there is a need for comparative analysis across countries to better understand these differences.

There are many reasons for nursing global mobility, i.e. family move, calling to serve, working conditions, etc. A way that academic and practice settings can support global mobility is to advocate for circular migration. In circular migration, the nurse would return to their originating country. By supporting circular migration, the nurse is exposed to training and different skills. The receiving country and hospital receive a competent nurse to work for a period of time, making an impact on the healthcare of that country. And finally, the originating country and hospital receive the nurse back, who can now share their training and experiences with others and continue to make an impact in the healthcare of their originating country.

In conclusion, addressing the global nursing shortage is a multifaceted issue that requires concentrated efforts from all stakeholders. By promoting collaboration between nursing academic and practice partners, we can educate, support, and retain more nurses in the workforce. We need to work together with policymakers and boards of nursing to facilitate and support circular migration. By working together, we can increase the nursing workforce and improve patient care to strengthen healthcare systems globally. Together, we can overcome the nursing shortage and create a healthier future for all.



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