

The Strategic Positioning of Indonesian Nurses in the International Healthcare Labor Market

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The increasing demand for healthcare professionals worldwide has highlighted the critical role of nurses in ensuring equitable and high-quality patient care (World Health Organization and OECD, 2024). As healthcare systems struggle to address workforce shortages, particularly in aging populations, international demand for migrant nurses continues to rise (Sweileh, 2024). Indonesian nurses, with their growing professional competencies and adaptability, are well positioned to play a significant role in the global healthcare labor market (Efendi *et al.*, 2021). However, strategic interventions are required to optimize their contributions and ensure well-being throughout the migration cycle.

Indonesian nurses' migration follows a structured cycle comprising the pre-migration, migration, and post-migration stages (Efendi, Aurizki and Pradipta, 2024). Each stage presents unique challenges, including regulatory barriers, cultural adaptation, and skill recognition in the destination countries (Pradipta *et al.*, 2023). While neighboring countries such as Singapore and Australia have increasing demand projections for international nurses, Indonesia may focus on improving its nursing education and adding the language competencies required in destination countries to enhance its competitiveness. The government, educational institutions, and communities must work together to develop a more agile and adaptive nursing workforce in alignment with the Golden Indonesia 2045 vision.

Beyond economic contributions, Indonesian migrant nurses act as enablers of healthcare quality by transferring knowledge and skills across borders. Their presence in international settings fosters cross-cultural competency, adoption of evidence-based practice, and strengthened professional networks. However, ethical recruitment practices and support systems are necessary to prevent exploitation and to ensure their rights as global healthcare professionals. Recognizing migration as a catalyst for national development rather than a mere labor export strategy will help position Indonesia as a center of nursing excellence.

Investment in the educational sector is crucial for enhancing the quality of nursing education, making it imperative to incorporate comprehensive language training and facilitate access to international licensure requirements mandated by receiving countries. By doing so, Indonesian nurses will not only be better prepared for the global healthcare market but also be more competitive, allowing them to meet the diverse needs of healthcare systems worldwide. This strategic approach, combined with robust support mechanisms, ensures that Indonesian nurses are well equipped to face the challenges of migration and maximize their contributions to international healthcare.

As we move toward 2030 and beyond, strategic policies on nursing human resources should be prioritized. Indonesian nurses can become key players in the global healthcare landscape by leveraging Indonesia's nursing surplus and by ensuring continuous professional development. It is now time to transform workforce challenges into opportunities, reinforcing Indonesia's commitment to advancing global health through a well-equipped, professional, and internationally competitive nursing workforce.

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