Nurse Migration and Distribution: A Global Determinant to Achieving 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

By

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BACKGROUND

- The 2016 Global Conference on Health Promotion launched a multi-lateral, global agenda aimed at achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The resultant declaration identified **health and wellbeing** as crucial to achieving targets set for all 17 SDG goals.

- A crisis in human resources for health (HRH) has certain nations facing persistent difficulties in health promotion and disease prevention.
- Nurses comprise a very large sector of the global health workforce.
- Shifts in labor markets and variation in the distribution of skilled nursing workforce impact health promotion.
- The World Health Organization reports the current global shortage of nursing workforce stands at 7.2 million with the number expected to grow to 12.9 million by 2035.
- **This profound nursing shortage threatens sustainability of health systems and thwarts any efforts aimed at attaining Sustainable Development Goals.**

PURPOSE

- **This poster pivots the nursing profession as a critical determinant to achieving 2030 SDGs.**
- **The presentation provides an analysis on the impact of nurse migration and maldistribution on quality and equitable care for at risk populations.**
- **Authors provide an analysis of the 2030 SDG targets to identify areas of opportunity for the nursing profession.**

MATERIALS & DATA

IMPACT ANALYSIS

- The potential shortfall in health workers by 2030 is estimated at 18 million. Major shortages of health workers are experienced in African, South-East Asia and Eastern Mediterranean Regions.
- High income countries face ever growing labor demands for nurses while low income countries are unable to retain enough of their educated and skilled workforce. The issue remains how to target and retain skilled workers in areas with high demand.
- "Push factors" for migration and maldistribution include educational/training opportunities, pay, working conditions, governing systems, recruitment practices and socio-geo-political environments.
- Barriers to emigration for the purpose of pursuing health care work include language, license registration into destination country, licensure requirements, downward occupational mobility and complex renumeration factors and remittance patterns.
- Resulting maldistribution of healthcare professionals is contributing to growing health disparities which are impediments to achieving SDG Goal No. 3. This goal is not only a desirable outcome, but also arguably a pre-condition necessary for the achievement of all other SDG goals.
- Implementing the broad SDGs agenda poses challenges in policy and practice at global, national and local levels. A proposed framework integrating SDG No. 3 (Good Health & Well-being) across all 17 SDGs allows for actionable strategies.

Policy Focus at Present

- Integrate registration systems to assess nurse qualifications.
- Targeted efforts to mitigate "push" and assess "pull factors."
- Provide clinical options for unemployed nurses and recent graduates in less-populated sites to gain experience.
- Promote nurses' independence and skillset beyond specialized acute care to private practice.
- Establish standard education curriculum for core competencies on a global scale.
- Increase budget capacity for nursing education, faculty and training facilities.
- Promotion of male nurses into the profession.
- Establish ethical recruitment codes for all to protect migrating professionals.
- Develop reliable global data collection processes for the health workforce.
- Foster leadership culture for health promotion.

CONCLUSIONS

This poster pivots the nursing profession as a **critical determinant** to achieving SDGs. There is need for acceleration in educational activities aimed to understand SDGs, and a shift in emphasis towards formulating actionable goals for the nursing profession.

The most effective starting point to lasting solutions is addressing nurse migration and maldistribution of human resource for health. Specifically there is a need to:

- Formulate national level agendas that integrate lasting solutions to global maldistribution of nurses.
- Develop uniform standards for international recruitment that allow for mutual wins between countries.
- Develop and implement measuring processes allowing for objective performance analysis and data production.
- Promote a global culture that supports ethical recruitment policies and practices.
- Formulate **inclusive, transformative and sustainable** international policy on solutions to nurse shortages and health disparities.
- Empower national and international nurse leaders to look beyond personal/organizational profitability to the solemn responsibility of health promotion.
- Avoid oversimplification of processes and preoccupation with failure in formulation of SDG policy frameworks.
- Establish a global financial commitment for fair labor and economic policies for health promotion.

Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

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