

## Sigma's 30th International Nursing Research Congress

### Haiti National School of Nursing: 100 Years of Nursing Education

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this project was to “look back to look ahead” by exploring two items: historical milestones during the 100 years of the Haiti National School of Nursing in Port-au-Prince (HNSON, 1918-2018) and the needs of the school’s nursing students from the perspective of Haitian nurses.

**Methods:** A descriptive qualitative study using surveys were distributed to Haitian nurses in attendance at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Haiti National School of Nursing on October 14, 2018 in Port-au-Prince. The 14 question survey used a mix of closed- and open-ended questions requiring written responses from the respondents. The survey was translated from English into French for the nurses. Responses were translated from French into English for analysis.

**Results:** Sixteen Haitian nurses completed the survey during the celebration and these were collected. Thirteen respondents were alumni of the Haiti National School of Nursing and three respondents were graduates of other nursing schools including the National School of Nursing in Cap-Haitien, Haiti and a school in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, and one school was not reported. The average number of years of practicing nursing was thirty and three of the respondents were retired. All of the 16 respondents have practiced nursing in Haiti. Positions for the nurses that were still actively working include teaching in undergraduate nursing programs (the majority were clinical instructors at HNSON) and midwifery in Haiti. Several were directors of nursing in public or private hospitals in Haiti. Some respondents identified the implementation of a four year curriculum of training which conferred a baccalaureate in science (nursing) as an important moment in the history of the school. The needs of the school include equipment that is in good working order, use of technology to teach in the classroom and at the bedside, the availability of books, a skills lab, creation of internships for the students, more preceptors are needed at the public university hospital in Port-au-Prince, more instructors, and creating an environment that is conducive to learning for the students. A dream for the next 100 years in the history of the school would be the creation of a graduate school offering programs in nursing administration, nursing education, and the family nurse practitioner role.

**Conclusion:** Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere and its population suffers from severe health hardships. Multiple reasons contribute to this – natural disasters, unstable political conditions, lack of a middle class, limited access to western medicine, ineffective infrastructure, high maternal-child mortality rates and an under-funded healthcare system. There is a shortage of Haitian nurses and also a migration of nurses to higher income countries that provide more opportunities. The establishment of the Haiti National School of Nursing began in 1917 with a treaty between the United States and Haiti. Two U.S. Naval nurses opened the school in 1918, and it remained under U.S. control until 1931. Over the last 100 years, the school affiliated with the medical school, focused on public health nursing, maternity and nutritional issues, and developed and implemented a four year nursing curriculum. Since the earthquake of 2010, some of the school’s nursing faculty were able to graduate from a three-year graduate program in which they learned advanced educational and research skills to teach the next generation of Haitian nurses. The respondents were very optimistic for the future of the HNSON, as reflected in some their comments. The nurses value their professional responsibilities to take care of the Haitian people and to help the Haitian population stay healthy.

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**Title:**

Haiti National School of Nursing: 100 Years of Nursing Education

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**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

The purpose of the activity is to describe a brief history of educating Haitian nurses at the government school in Port-au-Prince and provide results of an evaluation of alumni gathered at the 100th anniversary celebration.

**Content Outline:**

1. Early years of the Haiti National School of Nursing
  - a. Navy nurses open the school in 1918
  - b. U. S. Red Cross nurses take over until 1931
  - c. Pan-American Sanitary Bureau takes over through 1945
2. Surviving environmental and government disasters

3. After the earthquake
4. A celebration of 100 years of Haiti National School of Nursing, 10-14-18
5. Survey of nurses at the celebration
6. Demographics of respondents
7. Important moments in the history of the school.
8. What do the HNSON students need?
9. What does the future hold for HNSON?

First Primary Presenting Author

***Primary Presenting Author***

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**Author Summary:** Ms. Baird has been a hospital based and academic nurse educator in med/surg nursing for over 20 years. She has traveled to Haiti since 2013 with Dr. Ellen Palmer. Projects include the development of a simulation laboratory at Grace Children's Hospital and numerous CPR classes. She is the director of Faculty Development at the University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Palmer has been a nurse educator for over 35 years. She has been involved with international global nursing projects for over 30 years. She first visited Haiti in 1976 with a trip to the eye clinic in Petit Goave. This veteran nurse educator is a frequent speaker on global nursing issues.

Third Author

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**Author Summary:** Ms. Sylvain worked in public health nursing (CARE International) in Haiti for many years. As a CARE nurse, she partnered with families, communities and the Haitian Ministry of Health to support sustainable development and improve the quality of life. She is the Director of the Haiti National School of Nursing, a position that she has held since 2013.

Fourth Author

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**Author Summary:** Jocelyne graduated from the Haiti National School of Nursing. She received her master's degree in nursing in Switzerland while she also provided bedside nursing. She returned to Port-au-Prince many years ago, and has been the director of nurses at Grace Children's Hospital in Port-au-Prince. Jocelyne acts as the clinical site coordinator for the hospital and is a liaison with the schools of nursing. She supervises a nursing staff of more than 25.