



The Nursing Now campaign launches

Investing in nurses to achieve global health.

HEALTH should be a recognized universal right. Having an equitable health system should be a universal standard. And having highly skilled nurses recognized for their expertise in providing care and leading efforts to transform a nation's health and health system should be a universal practice.

U.S. nurses are not alone in our quest to be a prominent voice at all tables in determining how to best shape and deliver healthcare. Just a few months ago, a 3-year, global campaign was publicly launched called Nursing Now under the auspices of the Burdett Trust for Nursing in collaboration with the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the World Health Organization (WHO). More than 30 countries, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland, South Africa, and the United States, were represented at launch-day activities held around the world. Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, served as the official patron.

The Nursing Now campaign is focused on improving health globally by raising the profile and status of nurses worldwide. The agenda is ambitious, but it's critically important and can be accomplished with real investment in nursing and ongoing support. Nurses and midwives make up the largest segment of the health workforce worldwide, and they can have a great impact on the health and well-being of individuals and communities because of their expertise and extensive reach through their varied roles and settings.

That said, we're facing a global shortfall of 9 million nurses and midwives projected by 2030. The WHO *Triple Impact* report, whose findings helped initiate the campaign, also noted that although there is "enormous innovation and creativity in nursing," nurses "are too often undervalued and their contribution underestimated."

To achieve its vision, the campaign has developed goals that are similar to those outlined in the U.S.-focused Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Both the campaign and the report address advancing nurses' education and professional development, including leader-

ship skill-building and their ability to effectively function in rapidly evolving healthcare environments. The campaign and report also call for increasing nurses' influence on health policy and engaging nurses in leadership roles at all levels. And both serve as clarion calls for investing in the nursing workforce and viewing nurses as the key to solving many healthcare-related issues.

Lord Nigel Crisp, former chief executive of the National Health Service in England, and co-chair of the international board leading Nursing Now, recently met with the ICN Executive Committee. In discussing ICN's action plans for the campaign, Crisp reinforced the importance of engaging the world's nursing leaders to make an indelible impact on global health, saying, "I believe that strengthening nursing is one of the single biggest things we can do to improve health globally. Nurses, wherever they are, are the health professionals closest to the community and are invaluable in promoting health and preventing diseases as well as providing care and treatment."

As the U.S. representative from the American Nurses Association to ICN and its first vice-president, I have the privilege of talking with nurses from many of the 130-plus member countries. I've learned that no matter our country of origin, nurses share the ability to identify patient and population needs; implement effective, and sometimes very creative, interventions; and understand that health promotion and preventive measures are critical to raising the health of patients, communities, and nations. Many of us also share similar struggles, although to varying degrees: staffing shortages, workplace and societal violence, emerging infectious diseases, and barriers to practicing to our full education and expertise. Addressing these, too, will help achieve the impact we want on global health.

The Nursing Now campaign will run to the end of 2020, which coincides with the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth and a worldwide celebration of nurses. I encourage all nurses to learn more about the campaign at nursingnow.org and to support each other in leading the way to helping people achieve health.



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