The Future of Nursing: A Worldwide Perspective

When the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released its report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, in 2010, it instantly became the number-one downloaded document ever for the IOM. I am sure that was due in large part to the number of nurses in the United States. We would outnumber any other discipline! In the interest of full disclosure, I know for a fact that some of us downloaded it many times because we couldn’t find where it was filed on our computers!

A few other countries have issued similar reports, which provides the potential to now look at nursing from a global perspective. The first definition for the term *global* in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary (n.d.) is “involving the entire world.” Thus, it is not surprising to learn that global meetings are being held in seven regions (Middle East, Asia/Oceania, The Caribbean, Central Latin America, Africa, Europe, and North America). These meetings are being organized through nursing’s international nursing honor society, Sigma Theta Tau International.

In 2013, Sigma Theta Tau International created a Global Advisory Panel on the Future of Nursing; it is scheduled to begin a series of worldwide meetings starting in 2015 (Sigma Theta Tau International, 2015). Demands for nurses exceed the supply—even in the United States, where some new graduates have difficulty finding employment in their geographic region in acute care hospitals. The Panel first met in 2014 and ends its “world tour” in 2016.

The Panel’s endeavor is not a lighthearted engagement. First, this work involves both nursing and midwifery, a common combination in many countries. Second, the world tour targets every area of the world, except Antarctica. Third, it is an interprofessional effort, with many other disciplines expected to engage in the conversations. The goals of this work relate to developing relationships and inform policy.

From my perspective, what really is important is that ministers of health, along with economists, are being asked to engage in this conversation. In other words, this is an opportunity for nurses to shape health care and to do so in a way that appeals to broad society through the economic advantages we can bring. This meeting will bring a new perspective to the term global health. Imagine what the future of nursing can be!

REFERENCES


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