Nurses and Midwives: A Force for Health

Global Standards for the initial education of nurses supporting research to develop the evidence base for practice.

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Focus in this presentation

1. WHO 2009 “Survey of the situation of nursing and midwifery in the WHO European Member States 2008/09”
2. WHO (2009) “Standards for the initial education of professional nurses and midwives”
3. A WHO (2001)”European strategy for Nursing and Midwifery education”
Background

• WHO European Region 2nd Ministerial Conference - Munich Declaration (2000) – “Nurses and Midwives: A Force for Health”

• The European Regional Office is charged by the European Regional Committee to monitor progress on the implementation of the principles set out in the declaration

• Previous surveys to monitor general progress: :
  – 2001
  – 2004

  – Survey of the situation of nursing and midwifery in the WHO European Member States 2008/09
Political Support

- Continued political will and commitment. 25 countries reported government actions & statements regarding nursing/or midwifery.
  Main themes:
  - Move of initial training into higher education
  - Widening scope of nursing and midwifery practice
  - Delegation of nursing and midwifery roles to health care assistants

- 31 countries reported moves by Professional Associations to ensure governmental and societal commitments
Scope of professional practice

- Care in hospitals
- Home care
- Provision of health promotion
- Community/Public Health Care
- Assistance in medical treatment
- Counselling and user education
- Case Management
- Independent role in treatment regimens
- Prescription of drugs/assistive devices
- Other
Expansion of Professional Practice

• Evidence of expanded scope of nursing & midwifery practice:
  – Case management functions (19 countries)
  – Independent role in treatment regimens (18 countries)
  – Prescription of drugs/assistive devices (12 countries – others currently seeking legislation to permit this)

• Debate about advanced practice roles and what regulatory frameworks should be put in place – some focus on specific tasks, others have permissive frameworks based on independent professional accountability
Aspects covered by legislative framework
Initial Education – Drivers for Change

• EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualification
  http://www.euro.who.int/nursingmidwifery/publications/20050816_1
• “Bologna Process” underway – Member States in EU committed to convergence of higher education structures and awards
• “Tuning Project” (part of Bologna Process) – focus on educational structures and content of studies. Nursing first health regulated group included.
## Duration of school education before entry to professional education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country / Region</th>
<th>Duration (Years)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Ireland (CNO)</td>
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<td>Czech Republic [Midwives]</td>
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<td>UK (RCM)</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>Serbia</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Moldova</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Ireland (NNA)</td>
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<td>Greece</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark, Czech Republic [Nurses], Cyprus, Bulgaria, Austria [Midwives]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
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<td>Tajikistan</td>
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<td>Armenia</td>
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<td>the f.Y.R. of Macedonia, Austria (Nurses), Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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**Note:** The duration of education varies across different countries and regions, with some countries requiring 9 years and others 12 years. The graph visually represents these differences, showing a range from 0 to 14 years.
Progress

Academic level of initial education

- Vocational
- Higher education
Characteristics of educational curricula

- Competencies to practise in hospitals
- Competency based
- Competencies to practise in community settings
- Competencies to practise in institutional long-term care settings
- Research-/evidence-based

Characteristics of educational curricula
Desirable % academically prepared nurses and midwives

• 2004 survey intended numbers of academically prepared nurses ranged between 5-30%, most countries aiming for 5-10%

• 2009 survey ranged between 20-100%. For some countries this means 10-30% with Masters or PhD qualifications

• Limited progress on inter-disciplinary learning – mainly in continuing education
Obstacles to N&M’s to work to their full potential

- Medically dominated health care system
- Lack of financial resources
- Problems of defining the professional roles of nurses/midwives
- Others
Nursing and Midwifery Research

• 11 (31%) countries have national nursing or midwifery research strategies
• 22 (63%) countries report availability of funding
• More than half the countries offer research based degrees for nurses/ midwives
Evaluation and Quality of Services

- 22 countries report measures to evaluate nursing/midwifery services (increase since 2004)
- 25 countries have professional standards, e.g. management of home deliveries
- Provision of indicators for monitoring services, e.g. hospital acquired infections

WHO/AP/Frank Preval
Global standards for the initial education of professional nurses and midwives

The goal of the 2009 global standards is to establish educational criteria and assure outcomes that:

- a) are based on evidence and competency;
- b) promote the progressive nature of education and lifelong learning; and
- c) ensure the employment of practitioners who are competent and who, by providing quality care, promote positive health outcomes in the populations they serve.
The standards

1. Programme graduates
2. Programme development/revision
3. Programme curriculum
4. Academic staff/faculty
5. Programme admission
4.1 Academic faculty

• 4.1.1 The head of a nursing or midwifery programme is a nurse or midwife who holds a graduate degree, is educated and experienced in leadership and administration, and demonstrates knowledge as an educator.

• 4.1.2 The core academic faculty are nurses and midwives who demonstrate knowledge as educators and have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree – preferably a graduate degree – with advanced preparation and clinical competence in their specialty area.

• 4.1.3 Other health professionals who are guest lecturers in nursing or midwifery programmes hold a graduate degree and possess clinical and educational expertise in their specialty.
5.1 Admission policy and selection

- 5.1.4 Nursing or midwifery schools have entry requirements that meet national criteria for higher education institutions including, but not limited to, completion of secondary education.
A WHO European strategy for NM education

• Main Objective

  – To state the fundamental principles of initial preparation of Nurses and Midwives
  – To provide a set of Guidelines for Member States
  – http://www.euro.who.int/nursingmidwifery/publications/20050629_16
Recommendations for: Future Action

- Implement workforce planning policies and strategies to make nursing and midwifery attractive career options for young people and to retain those that are qualified;
- Raise the level of initial professional education to the higher education sector in countries where this has not been done;
- Introduce advanced practice roles for nurses and midwives and the regulatory frameworks to support this;
Future Action Continued

- Address the increased need of people suffering from chronic conditions and needing long-term care;
- Support leadership development of nurses/midwives enabling them to contribute to decision-making at all levels of policy & service development;
- **Strengthen approaches for conceptualising, determining and measuring quality of nursing and midwifery services**;
- **Strengthen research capacity of nurses and midwives** - education and funding.
- Thank you