



The future of the nursing and midwifery workforces: TRIAD Communiqué 2016

Government chief nursing and midwifery officers, leaders of national nursing and midwifery associations and regulatory bodies from 95 countries, together with the International Confederation of Midwives, the International Council of Nurses and the World Health Organization, met in Geneva on 20-21 May 2016 for the sixth Triad meeting. The Triad focused on the future of the nursing and midwifery workforces and addressed issues critical to the provision of safe, quality nursing and midwifery care and effective regulation of the professions.

Often the only available health professionals for many are nurses and midwives who have a great responsibility to improve the health of the population as well as contribute to the achievement of global development goals. Evidence shows that nurses and midwives, in collaboration with interprofessional teams, have expertise in building on the strengths of individuals, families and communities to achieve better health outcomes. We are encouraged by the global commitments to improve the health of populations and ensure equitable access to quality health care. The newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) support universal health coverage (UHC) as a means of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. These commitments provide the nursing and midwifery workforces an opportunity to continue to make significant contributions to the provision of quality people-centred health services throughout the life course.

Evidence on health trends shows an increasingly evolving and complex context in which nurses and midwives deliver services. Therefore, greater commitment to investment in nursing and midwifery workforce management, education, practice, regulation and legislation is required.

The Triad commits to enhancing the effectiveness of the nursing and midwifery workforces in relation to all areas of nursing and midwifery development through the following mechanisms:

Advocacy for strong investments in nursing and midwifery

Delivering effective health interventions requires human, material and financial resources. Mutual collaboration, coordinated action and resource sharing among the nursing and midwifery communities, other health professionals, policy makers, labour organisations, governments, non-governmental organisations, donor agencies and all relevant stakeholders is essential.

The Triad commits to:

1. Support the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the Global strategic directions for strengthening nursing and midwifery 2016-2020 and related strategies to enhance quality people-centred health services.
2. Undertake evidence-based advocacy for the acquisition of adequate resources for nursing and midwifery development including the development and expansion of advanced nursing and midwifery practice roles that contribute to improved outcomes and a more effective use of resources.
3. Form sustainable intra and interprofessional collaboration to increase nursing and midwifery capacities to deliver the essential services in the context of UHC and the SDGs.

Management of the nursing and midwifery workforces

Evidence-based and effective health workforce planning and management are needed to meet the goal of scaling-up competent and diverse nursing and midwifery workforces. Adequate numbers of competent, well-prepared nurses and midwives, able to perform to their full scopes of practice, are pivotal to the achievement of UHC and the SDGs. This will maximise the highest return on

investment made in education, recruitment and retention of nurses and midwives in the health care workforce.

The Triad commits to engage with relevant stakeholders to:

1. Improve health information systems so as to inform policy development and management of the nursing and midwifery workforces.
2. Create a better balance between the clinical and educational settings in scaling-up the numbers, quality and relevancy of the nursing and midwifery workforces.
3. Assure the scopes of practice of nurses and midwives provide for the meeting of the current and future health needs of the populations they serve.
4. Generate evidence to make improvements in nursing and midwifery education and practice.
5. Establish and strengthen platforms for sharing evidence and best practices.
6. Formulate policies and strategies that ensure the availability, accessibility and acceptability of quality nursing and midwifery workforces.

Governance and accountability

It is crucial that systems and processes are in place to ensure the quality and capacity of pre-service and continuing education, and that education accreditation/oversight mechanisms are achievable, acceptable, credible and supported by legislation. Furthermore, to ensure equitable access to quality health services, supportive and enabling work environments focused on quality of care are needed. It is essential that nurses and midwives are involved in policy dialogue and decision making regarding the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of services and policies.

Therefore, the Triad commits to:

1. Strengthen or support the establishment of regulatory mechanisms to ensure the professional entry and ongoing competency of nurses and midwives.
2. Promote a supportive work environment for the delivery of safe, quality health care and the personal security of nurses and midwives.
3. Promote leadership, professional development and career paths.
4. Actively engage in policy dialogue to support quality care and the achievement of UHC and the SDGs to ensure better health for our citizens.



*The **International Council of Nurses (ICN)** is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. ICN is the international voice of nursing and works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.*

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*The **International Confederation of Midwives (ICM)** is a confederation of 125 midwives associations worldwide. ICM is the global voice of midwives, supporting and strengthening the midwifery profession as a means of improving maternal-newborn health globally.*

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*The **World Health Organization** is the United Nations specialized agency for health. It was established on 7 April 1948. WHO's objective, as set out in its Constitution, is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.*

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