

Strengthening nursing and midwifery

The Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the progress report on strengthening nursing and midwifery;¹

Recognizing the centrality of human resources for health to the effective operation of country health systems as highlighted in *The world health report 2006*;²

Recognizing the crucial contribution of the nursing and midwifery professions to health systems, to the health of the people they serve, and to efforts to achieve the internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and those of WHO's priority programmes;

Recalling resolution WHA57.19 on the challenge posed by the international migration of health personnel;

Recognizing the impact of "push" and "pull" factors in the countries concerned;

Concerned at continuing shortage of nurses and midwives in many countries, and its impact on health care, and more widely;

Mindful of previous resolutions to strengthen nursing and midwifery, including resolutions WHA42.27, WHA45.5, WHA49.1 and WHA54.12, and the strategic directions for nursing and midwifery services in place for the years 2002-2008;³

Concerned that some Member States do not yet give full recognition to the contribution of nursing and midwifery in their programmes and practices;

1. URGES Member States to confirm their commitment to strengthen nursing and midwifery by:

(1) establishing comprehensive programmes for the development of human resources which support the recruitment and retention, while ensuring equitable geographical distribution, in

¹ Document A59/23.

² *The world health report 2006. Working together for health*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2006.

³ *Nursing and midwifery services; strategic directions 2002-2008*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002.

sufficient numbers of a balanced skill mix, and a skilled and motivated nursing and midwifery workforce within their health services;

(2) actively involving nurses and midwives in the development of their health systems and in the framing, planning and implementation of health policy at all levels, including ensuring that nursing and midwifery is represented at all appropriate governmental levels, and have real influence;

(3) ensuring continued progress toward implementation at country level of WHO's strategic directions for nursing and midwifery;

(4) regularly reviewing legislation and regulatory processes relating to nursing and midwifery in order to ensure that they enable nurses and midwives to make their optimum contribution in the light of changing conditions and requirements;

(5) to provide support for the collection and use of nursing and midwifery core data as part of national health information systems;

(6) to support the development and implementation of ethical recruitment of national and international nursing and midwifery staff.

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to ensure the involvement of nurses and midwives in the integrated planning of human resources for health, particularly with respect to strategies for maintaining adequate numbers of competent nursing and midwifery personnel;

(2) to provide continuing support for the work of the Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery, and to recruit nurses and midwives in all relevant WHO programmes to ensure the contribution of nursing and midwifery in the development and implementation of WHO's policy and programmes;

(3) to provide support to Member States, in collaboration with local and global partners to strengthen the application of ethical recruitment guidelines;

(4) to provide support to Member States in optimizing the contribution of nursing and midwifery to meeting national health policies and the internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

(5) to encourage and support Member States in the provision of workplace environments that are safe and support the retention of nurses and midwives;

(6) to report to the Sixty-first and Sixty-third World Health Assembly in 2008 and 2010 on progress made in the implementation of this resolution.

Ninth plenary meeting, 27 May 2006
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