

WHA49.1 Strengthening nursing and midwifery

The Forty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Having reviewed the Director-General's report on strengthening nursing and midwifery;

Recalling resolutions WHA42.27, WHA45.5, WHA47.9 and WHA48.8 dealing with the role of nursing and midwifery personnel in the provision of quality health care in the strategy for health for all, and with education of health care providers;

Seeking to apply the spirit of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995);

Concerned about the problems resulting from the emergence of new diseases and the re-emergence of old diseases as highlighted in *The world health report 1996*;

Concerned about the necessity of effectively utilizing health care personnel, in view of rising costs, and mindful of the cost-effectiveness of good nursing/midwifery practice;

Recognizing the potential of nursing/midwifery to make a major difference in the quality and effectiveness of health care services in accordance with the Ninth General Programme of Work;

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to nursing/midwifery service development as an integral part of health development to maximize the contribution of nurses and midwives to achievements in the field of health;

Recognizing also that such an approach must be country-specific and be assured of the active involvement of nurses and midwives at all levels of the health care system, together with the recipients of health care, policy-makers, the public and private sectors, representatives of professional associations and educational institutions, and those who have responsibility for social and economic development,

1. THANKS the Director-General for his report and for the increased support to nursing in Member States;
2. URGES Member States:
 - (1) to involve nurses and midwives more closely in health care reform and in the development of national health policy;
 - (2) to develop, where these do not exist, and carry out national action plans for health including nursing/midwifery as an integral part of national health policy, outlining the steps necessary to bring about change in health care delivery, ensuring further development of policy, assessment of needs and utilization of resources, legislation, management, working conditions, basic and continuing education, quality assurance and research;
 - (3) to increase opportunities for nurses and midwives in the health teams when selecting candidates for fellowships in nursing and health-related fields;
 - (4) to monitor and evaluate the progress toward attainment of national health and development targets and in particular the effective use of nurses and midwives in the priority areas of equitable access to health services, health protection and promotion, and prevention and

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control of specific health problems;

(5) to strengthen nursing/midwifery education and practice in primary health care;

3. REQUESTS to the Director-General:

(1) to increase support to countries where appropriate in the development, implementation and evaluation of national plans for health development including nursing and midwifery;

(2) to promote coordination between all agencies and collaborating centres and other organizations concerned in countries to support their health plan and make optimal use of available human and material resources;

(3) to provide for the continued work of the Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery;

(4) to promote and support the training of nursing and midwifery personnel in research methodology in order to facilitate their participation in health research programmes;

(5) to keep the Health Assembly informed of progress made in the implementation of this resolution, and to report to the Fifty-fourth World Health Assembly in 2001.

Hbk Res., Vol. III (3rd ed.), 1.8 (Fifth plenary meeting, 23 May 1996 -

Committee A, first report)