

Interest in Advanced Practice Nursing in India

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Nurses are the most numerous of health care providers in India. India has 2 nurses and 0.725 physicians per 1000, with a globally typical concentration in urban areas leading to limited health care access in rural settings (WHO, 2016). India prepares a significant number of physicians and nurses and in that context the shortage of health care providers is interesting to consider (Prasanth, 2017; Sharma, 2015). The nurse practitioner role to date has not been formally recognized and no national statistics are available. Initiatives by the Indian Nursing Council (INC) are underway to implement education programs for a formal nurse practitioner role (INC, 2016; Prasanth, 2017). Previous efforts to develop an independent nurse practitioner role were curtailed due to financial and infrastructure limitations. Endeavors to provide education to enable nurses to assume advanced roles at private institutions such as the Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital while not widely adopted have been successful.

Critical Mass

There is current consideration of an independent nursing or nurse practitioner role in India from both the INC and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) (Prasanth, 2017). The INC has created a curriculum for a critical care NP role. According to the Indian Nursing Council (2016) the Critical Care Nurse Practitioner Program will be for BsC nurses to provide a higher level of care to critical patients to minimize sequelae and enhance full recovery (INC, 2016). Criteria for schools of nursing have been set and application invited to offer the MSc degree for the critical care NP. Development of the curriculum for the primary care NP, identified as a need by the MoHFW, is pending.

Protected Titles/Definitions

The current Nursing Practice Act, 1947 does not have a provision for the advanced practice nurse or nurse practitioner title. There is no current legislature proposed that would create a defined advanced or independent nursing role.

Regulation

The Indian Nursing Council Act of 1947 Nurses in India does not have a defined scope of practice for the nurse nor the nurse practitioner. Regulation for the independent, nurse practitioner, or advanced nursing practice role does not exist.

Education

The proposed critical care NP role would prepare graduate nurses to work independently and collaboratively with per institutional protocols. The INC curriculum will use competency based

education that emphasizes clinical (85%) supported by didactic course work (15%) (INC, 2016). The two year program would lead to an M.Sc degree in critical care NP. The NP education includes courses in Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Pharmacology, and Advanced Health / Physical Assessment, Nursing Research and Leadership. The critical care NP program would include a dissertation and criteria for research guides has been set.

Prescription Authority

Nurses in India do not currently have prescriptive authority.

Background Reading

Anand, S., Fan, V. (2016) The health workforce in India. World Health Organization.
http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/16058health_workforce_India.pdf

Nichols, B.L., Davis, C.R., & Richardson, D.R. (2011). Appendix J: International models of nursing. *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Institute of Medicine. Retrieved from: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/12956.html>

Web Links

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; <http://mohfw.nic.in/>

Indian Nursing Council; <http://www.indiannursingcouncil.org/>

Social Media Presence

Nurses in India have a presence on social media. The nurse practitioner role is not widely recognized and not present on social media.

References

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