

## **Interest in Advanced Practice Nursing in Nigeria**

Advanced Practice nursing as defined by the International Council of Nurses states a registered nurse who has acquired the expert knowledge base, complex decision making and clinical competency skills for expanded practice and is granted the credentialing of the country he/she is recognized to practice (International Council of Nurses, 2014).

Country: Nigeria

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Version: 1

Advanced Practice Role Evolution in Nigeria

The advanced practice role in Nigeria is entering a slow evolution. The profession of nursing, in this country is still in its infancy, and its recognition is still evolving. At the present time, there is no equivalent to the Bachelor's of Nursing as in developed Western states. The two advanced practice roles recognized at this time are the Nurse Anesthetist and the Nurse Midwife. Both of these roles are under the jurisdiction of the governmental agency of Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMC). Both roles are post nursing training certificates, through programs run by universities, after basic nursing training is completed (NaijaNurses, 2008).

Nursing came to Nigeria by way of the British colonials. Formal Nursing education in Nigeria is very different than Western nursing education, in that the entry level of nursing is that of a diploma or certificate in nursing. Nursing is considered a trade profession not a science, and there is no standardized exam as is the case in developed countries. Trades schools and diploma programs are prominent; and for some special certifying bodies such as for oncology or surgical nursing there are limited degree programs, but even the level of education received does not compare with nursing education in the Western world. In 1973 degrees began to be awarded for nursing from several different universities in many states in Nigeria.

Also in educating nurses, if the focus is on the trade of nursing, and not the profession or the science, a lack of a theoretical framework impedes the understanding of the importance of patient centered quality care.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMC) was created in 1988 and is the only legal, administrative corporate body charged with the performance of specific functions on behalf of the High Court of Nigeria (NaijaNurses, 2008). The Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMC) is the governmental agency served by a council board that is responsible formulating policies and regulations in regards to nursing practice and education. As of this writing there is no specific mention of Baccalaureate or Post Baccalaureate education specific to the term advanced practice nursing (NMC, 2014).

The post basic nurse anesthetist program was established in 1971, after the Nigerian civil war, due to the lack of manpower in the field of anesthesia. These advanced practice nurses are basically qualified professional nurses who have successfully undergone 18 months post basic specialist course of instruction in anesthesiology. They are certified, registered and licensed to practice as Nurse anesthetics by the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (N&MCN). Products of this school (nurse anesthetics), practice anesthesia, in the whole of the West Africa-sub region and beyond. The Nurse Anesthetist demonstrates sound professional, moral and ethical standard in practice and recognize those situations in which the care needed is beyond his/her individual competence and requires consultation and / or referral (University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, 2010).

The nurse midwifery program established in 1977 for those nurses recognized as nurse midwives through the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria. This also an eighteen month post nursing training certificate program. These nurses are trained in the area of reproductive health,

enabling them to deliver care of mothers in babies in homes, rural areas and hospitals (University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, 2010).

They scope of practice of advanced practice nurse practitioner who are registered as nurses (RNs) and in addition possess a post basic nursing education and clinical training in Midwifery (RM) i.e. RN and RM certificates (double qualification). In West Africa registers the role is It is not recognized as a role requiring advanced education. But the hope is that with time, continued explanation, and lobbying, this level of nursing, will be regarded as advanced education and clinical Practice degrees (Madubuko, n.d.)

#### References

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