

Impact of foreign Nurses

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Many countries including the United States has reported a nursing shortage within the past ten years. This shortage is due to an increase in the older population and slow growing supply in nurses. It is predicted by the next decade nursing demand will increase because of an aging workforce. There will be an increase in nurse retirement which will contribute to the nursing shortage. Many facilities in the past and future will hirer foreign registered Nurse. In this paper I will discuss the impact and challenges of foreign nurses working abroad.

The United States population is projected to grow 18% in the first twenty years of the 21st century. The aging population 65 years and older will also increase. This will leave a growing need for Registered Nurses. The United States department of health and human services predicts a shortage of 800,000 full time registered nurses by years 2020 (Berger,Brush&Sochalski,2004).

Hiring international nurses has been seen as an inexpensive solution to the nursing shortage. “On average, hospitals pay a 5,000 to 10,000 dollars recruitment fee for each nurse. Most recruitment agency will agree to refund the fee if the nurse does not uphold the contract. Although Hospital agree initial cost for hiring abroad is more costly than hiring a domestic nurse, many feel they save money in the long run because of less turnover. Recruiting abroad can be less costly than raising salaries, increasing benefits and providing other economic incentives needed to retain domestic nurses” (Berger, Brush & Sochalski, 2004, pg6).

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There are many different factors that make foreign nurses want to leave their native country. These factors are mainly put in two categories, “the push and pull factor of nursing migration” (Huston, 2010, pg 89). The push factor, are conditions that makes the registered nurse want to leave their country. For Example, economic instability, dangerous work environment, limited career opportunities and lack of resources. The pull factors are opportunities that draw the nurse to a different country. For example, political stability, pay rate increase and better working conditions (Buchan,2006). Many foreign nurse state they would have loved to remain in their native country. Their native country holds their family, familiar culture and environment. Overwhelming pull and push factors influence many foreign nurses to leave their families and countries behind.

The push and pull factors has negatively effected the donor countries. Many of foreign nurse are coming from the poorest and unhealthy countries. Removing most of their Registered Nurses can increase to poor patient outcomes. For example, exporting large amounts of Pilipino nurse has put a strain on the Philippines health care system. A number of other countries such as Africa, Asia and the Caribbean are facing the same dilemma. African countries have roughly 100 nurses per 100,000 patients. Recruitment of experienced African nurses is straining to a country deeply affected by HIV/AIDS, poor health care system and economic troubles. Besides poor nurse to patient ratio exporting African nurse affects the local economy. The South African economy losses approximately 180,000 dollars per year for each working person that leaves the country.

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The receiving countries gain the financial benefits of the working nurse while the donor country bears the losses. The loss of vital African nurses has impacted the economy greatly. The South African Nursing Council has suggested to decrease supply to abroad countries (Berger, Brush & Sochalski, 2004).

Strong push and pull factors raise ethical issues for the foreign nurse. Although intuition goes through a great deal to recruit the foreign nurse, some nurses express they have been treated unfairly upon arrival. Studies have shown many foreign nurses have difficulty adjusting to their new employment and are shocked about their new reality. Some employers may offer foreign nurses lesser wages than domestic nurses and harder work loads. New foreign nurses usually make 5% less than the domestic nurse but wages are usually equal after 6 years of employment. Some recruitment agency may illegally charge the foreign nurse a sign-on fee. Many contracts include large penalties, such as 50,000 dollars fee for breach of contract (Huston, 2010). The above ethical issues have led to governmental intervention. The United States has implemented many labor laws to protect vulnerable populations such as the foreign nurse.

Hiring foreign nurses have many pros and cons. Developed countries are at an advantage because of the pull factors they can offer to the foreign nurse. Less developed countries suffer from loss of work force. Although some governmental agencies have tried to protect foreign nurses and the population they serve, international mobility is left

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unchecked. There still remain a great disparity between nurse- patient ratio in relation to developed and non developed countries. So the decision lies on nursing leader across the world. Prior to recruiting foreign nurses, nursing leaders should acknowledge “some countries suffers from its effects while others benefit”(Huston,2012,pg102).

Reference:

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