

Editorial

Nursing as a career choice....



Nursing as a career choice comes to mind at the end of the academic year, and one wonders whether 2024 will open new avenues for the profession and if the number of nursing students registered will exceed all expectations.

Is nursing still valued by the younger generation as a career of choice and the fulfilment of a passion or dream, or is nursing seen as the last resort for finding a job?

The message conveyed to those planning a future does not always emphasise the critical role nurses play in the healthcare system in providing essential care and support to patients. The choices for professional nurses are not included in the discussions of nursing as a career. Nursing is one of only a few careers where the sky is the limit – do any of the career guidance teachers tell those considering a healthcare career of the multiple career paths in nursing? Is it not time that the young nurses offer their services to the schools or training facilities to promote a career such as nursing? The days where the Florence Nightingale image was what the younger generations dreamt of is long gone, and it will take the young nurses to change their perceptions.

2024 must be a year where we focus on young individuals and educate them about the diverse and rewarding career opportunities within nursing, leverage social media platforms and digital channels to showcase the dynamic and fulfilling aspects of nursing. We need to engage with younger audiences through informative and inspiring content, virtual events, and interactive discussions.

With artificial intelligence posing a threat to many jobs and careers, nursing is using the advancements in technology to improve the care patients receive. Nursing is expected to continue to play a crucial role in healthcare today and in years to come. With the changes in disease profiles and an aging population, the demand for skilled nurses is likely to remain high. Nurses are expected to take on more responsibilities utilising technology to coordinate care, be on the frontline of research, and to continue to be an advocate for our patients. There is an increased focus on specialised areas of nursing, and it is exciting to see how nurses excel in all areas of the healthcare industry. Specialised areas such as geriatrics, critical care, neonatology, home-based care, primary health care, and mental health are only a few clinical specialities where nurses are excelling.

How can we as nurses continue to change the healthcare scene and be mentors for those inspired to join the profession and to keep those in the profession motivated and proud of what nurses are achieving? Sharing best practices and knowledge allows nurses to learn from each other's experiences, gain new insights and improve the quality of care they provide. By sharing best practices, we promote collaboration, professional growth and the exchange of knowledge within the nursing profession.

The image of nurses will change if we dare to share and dare to take part in promoting our skills and competencies. The Forum for Professional Nurse Leaders and Nursing Education Association is again taking hands organising a Lighting the Future Conference in July 2024 and this two-day event in Gauteng is an opportunity for all nurses to share their best practices. By taking part, we can enhance patient outcomes, streamline processes, and stay updated with the latest evidence-based practices, and learn from our peers.

With the 2023 festive season approaching, I want to thank you, as a nurse, for your unwavering service, and know that your hard work and commitment are deeply valued and recognised.

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