Reading

Nurse Migration

There are more nurses today than at any time in history, yet a global nursing shortage threatens to cripple health care systems worldwide. Because the underlying causes are complex and vary in different regions, a simple, short-term fix will not remedy the situation.

In developing nations—particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America—a major reason for the shortage is nurse migration to developed countries in Europe and North America as well as Australia to help fill vacancies there.

Nurse migration is hardly a recent phenomenon. The Philippines have for years trained many more nurses than the country needs, with thousands working abroad and sending money to relatives back home (nearing $1 billion annually). From that standpoint, migration of nurses from poorer to wealthier countries would appear to benefit all involved. But there is another side to the story. Today, even the Philippines feels the effects of the nursing shortage, with nurses continuing to migrate abroad while positions at home go unfilled.

Lured by the higher salaries and better quality of life available in wealthier countries, nurses from developing countries frequently leave behind already overburdened health care systems, where nurses are often the primary caregivers because doctors, too, are in short supply. Conditions then deteriorate further as the nurse-to-population ratio declines, a number that is estimated to be ten times higher in European than in African countries. Some Latin American countries are experiencing such a shortage of nurses that doctors actually outnumber them, leaving the bulk of health care up to assistant nurses, who have only rudimentary training.

Routine immunizations and prenatal care fall victim to the nursing shortage in developing countries, and in many cases the results can be life threatening. In African countries where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is rampant, some patients go untreated not because lifesaving drugs are unavailable but because there are not enough nurses to administer them.

In developed countries in Europe and North America, the nursing shortage largely stems from an aging population, who require more health care services, coupled with a dwindling supply of nurses, many of whom are likewise nearing retirement age, with fewer young people preparing to replace them.

A common thread among nurse-importing countries—underinvestment in nursing education dating back two or more decades—has prevented them from creating a stable workforce to meet current and future

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needs. The United Kingdom, for example, still feels the effects of a cut-back in nurse training some twenty years ago. In the United States, nursing schools turn down thousands of qualified applicants every year because of their own shortages of nursing faculty. Developed countries need to invest in nursing education and focus on retaining and rewarding nurses appropriately, both financially and through high-quality working conditions.

Widespread nurse migration helps neither the host country nor the country of origin in the long run, does nothing to remedy the underlying cause of the shortage, and results in millions of people being deprived of the health care they need.

Answer the questions about **Nurse Migration.**

Questions 1–6

Complete the summary using the list of words below.

The 1..... of nurses in developing nations is largely caused by nurses leaving their countries to work 2..... . It is difficult for poorer nations to retain their nurses because better salaries and living conditions 3..... many nurses to work in wealthier countries. When nurses migrate to other countries, there are fewer 4..... health care givers left in their own countries. The lack of trained doctors as well as nurses means that health care is often 5..... by workers who have only 6..... skills.

abroad	complex	qualified
administered	cripple	rudimentary
bulk	lure	shortage

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Questions 7–9

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

Write

TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information.*
FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information.*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this in the passage.*

_____ 7. A primary reason for the nursing shortage in developed countries is the health care needs of the aging population.

_____ 8. There is not a large enough supply of qualified applicants for nursing schools in the United States.

_____ 9. In the United Kingdom, a high percentage of nurses have retired during the past two decades.

My Words

Write the words that are new to you. Look them up in the dictionary and write their definitions.

Words	Definitions

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Word Families

noun	complexity	The complexity of the nursing shortage problem makes it difficult to solve.
adjective	complex	The reasons for the worldwide nursing shortage are complex.
adverb	complexly	Some modern health care delivery systems have been complexly developed.

noun	qualification	A nurse who has the right qualifications will have no trouble finding a job.
verb	qualify	At nursing school, a student learns the skills to qualify for a career in nursing.
adjective	qualified	Qualified nurses are needed everywhere.

noun	rampancy	The epidemic spread with a rampancy that was frightening.
adjective	rampant	The rampant spread of the epidemic made it difficult to control.
adverb	rampantly	The disease spread rampantly throughout the region.

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noun	shortage	The nursing shortage is affecting countries around the world.
verb	shorten	Lack of proper medical care can shorten a patient's life.
adjective	short	Both nurses and doctors are in short supply in many places.
adverb	shortly	The nurse said, "The doctor will be with you shortly."

noun	vacancy	When a nurse leaves a job, it is not always easy to fill the vacancy.
verb	vacate	Many nurses vacate their jobs in their native countries in favor of better positions elsewhere.
adjective	vacant	A vacant position at a hospital will be filled quickly if the salary and benefits are attractive.
adverb	vacantly	The patient stared vacantly as the nurse tended to him.

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Word Family Practice

Choose the correct word family member from the list below to complete each blank.

Nurses are in **1**..... supply in many parts of the world. There are many reasons for this lack of nurses; the issue is filled with **2**..... . A solution needs to be found soon, because the problem has become **3**..... . When nurses **4**..... their positions at hospitals and health care centers, it is not easy to find other nurses to replace them. The ability to administer health care where it is needed is crippled when there are not enough **5**..... nurses.

1.	shortage	shorten	short
2.	complexities	complex	complexly
3.	rampancy	rampant	rampantly
4.	vacancies	vacate	vacant
5.	qualifications	qualifies	qualified

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Word Skill

Compound Words
When two or more words join to form a new word, that word is called a compound word. Sometimes, the meaning of the compound word is related to the meanings of the two separate words.

standpoint = stand + point
Meaning: the place where you stand, the position from which you see and understand things.

Read the sentences. Write a definition for each underlined word.

1. Work at the health care center came to a standstill because there was not enough money to pay the staff.

   standstill: _____

2. The new nurse has been a real standout with excellent reviews from doctors and patients alike.

   standout: _____

Listening

CD 1 Track 14

*Listen to the talk. Complete the sentences below. Write **ONE NUMBER ONLY** for each answer.*

1. In the United States, the bulk of nursing school programs take ..... years.

2. In the United Kingdom, ... percent of nurses have degrees.

3. There has been a decline of ..... percent or more of people applying to nursing schools in the United States.

4. By 2015, there may be as many as ..... vacancies for nurses in the United States.

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