



From the Editor

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2020: The Year of the Nurse and the Midwife

As you probably know by now, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. The WHO recognizes that nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing health services:

These are the people who devote their lives to caring for mothers and children; giving lifesaving immunizations and health advice; looking after older people and generally meeting everyday essential health needs. They are often, the first and only point of care in their communities (WHO, 2020)

Why has the WHO designated 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife? **The world needs 9 million more nurses and midwives if it is to achieve universal health coverage by 2030.** The International Confederation of Midwife, International Council of Nurses, Nursing Now, and the United Nations Population Fund have joined the WHO in a year-long effort to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives, highlight the challenging conditions they often face, and advocate for increased investments in the nursing and midwifery workforce.

Three Major Messages

The campaign has three major messages (WHO, 2020):

1. **Strengthen nursing and midwifery to achieve health for all.** This is the key to universal health coverage. Educating nurses and midwives to international standards saves resources by reducing the need for costly and unnecessary interventions, and increases the quality of care and health for all. The two professions must be strengthened to enable nurses and midwives to be valued and to work to their full potential in a safe environment where their work is integrated with other health care professionals. As 70% of the global health and social workforce are women, and nurses and midwives represent a large portion of this pool, strengthening nursing and midwifery will have the additional benefits of promoting gender equity, contributing to economic development, and supporting other Sustainable Development Goals.
2. **Boost nursing and midwifery leadership and influence to improve health services.** Although nurses and midwives are already advocates and innovators in their communities, clinics, hospitals, and the health care system, they must also be properly valued and represented in health leadership roles where they can guide health policy and investment. Overcoming profession-

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al, socio-cultural, and economic barriers is a necessary first step.

3. **Commit political will and funding to improve nursing and midwifery.** Just as universal health coverage is a political choice, so also is domestic investment in nursing and midwifery.

Get Involved!

The year-long campaign presents a unique opportunity for nurses and other health care workers to get involved and demonstrate broad public and political support to address the 18 million health care worker shortage. The WHO has pulled together a toolkit to help. See Figure 1 (p. 47) for "Ideas for Campaign Activities" that lists some campaign activities you and your colleagues could consider implementing. Although activities will occur throughout 2020, the "Timeline for Potential Opportunities" might provide some ideas for when your campaign activities could take place (see Figure 2, p. 47).

Free campaign materials are available for download on the WHO's website (<https://www.who.int/news-room/campaigns/year-of-the-nurse-and-the-midwife-2020/get-involved/campaign-materials>), such as social media tiles, posters, animations, and roll-up banners. Further, be on the lookout for the report, *State of the World's Nursing in 2020*, which will be available in April 2020. The report will provide a global picture of the nursing workforce and support evidence-based planning to optimize the contributions of this workforce to improve health and wellbeing for all, and set the agenda for data collection, policy dialogue, research, and advocacy.

Finally, we would love to hear your stories and photographs to feature in our column "Inspirations." Please help us share your successes and challenges. Email us at pnjrn1@ajj.com and your story may be featured in an upcoming issue of *Pediatric Nursing*.

We are pediatric nurses, members of the most trusted profession. Let us take advantage of this unique opportunity to join other nurses and midwives in celebrating all that we are!

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Figure 1.
Ideas for Campaign Activities

Organize Recognition Awards/Certificates

Organize recognition awards/certificates for midwives and nurses in your local/national health care facilities in appreciation of their contribution to the community.

Set Up or Take Part in Public Events

Organize public events and meetings with active participation of nurses and midwives, patients, national health leaders, and health sector partners. You could use an event to recognize and appreciate nurses and midwives – live on stage or through videos – encouraging nurses and midwives to tell their own stories.

Display Campaign Posters

Produce and display International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife posters at strategic locations – supermarkets, bus stops, schools, local health facilities, health ministry, among others.

Engage Local Leaders and Celebrities

Ask your local leaders (health care leaders and other leaders) to promote the Year of Nurse and the Midwife in their speeches, on social media, websites, and television and radio interviews.

Work Through the Media

Getting media coverage for your activities can take our message to mass public audiences and helps to get the attention of policy makers and politicians.

Work with Artists

Approach artists to create artwork for health care workers, with a focus on nursing and midwifery. Encourage theatre groups to produce plays on health care workers, with an emphasis on nurses and midwives.

Build and Strengthen Partnerships

Many voices strengthen our call. Work with organizations that share your goals and form coalitions so there are more voices behind the celebration. Engage with nursing and midwifery groups and associations, non-governmental organizations, local health care advocates, and community leaders in your efforts.

Get Active on Social Media

Join the drum roll and participate in our appreciation social media campaign on Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Share photos and video “testimonials” – of and from nurses and midwives, patients, health care leaders, influencers, and advocates – explaining why this vital workforce is essential, and why we need greater investment in the health workforce. The primary hashtag we are using is #SupportNursesAndMidwives, but also look out for posts using #Nurses2020 and #midwives2020.

Get Moving: Organize Your Own National Walk the Talk

“Walk the Talk: The Health for All Challenge” promotes healthy lifestyles and highlights the need for access to health care for all people around the world. We encourage you to work with local partners and organize this fun event to get people moving.

Source: WHO, 2020.

Figure 2.
Timeline of Potential Opportunities

March 8 – International Women’s Day
April 7 – World Health Day; launch of the State of the World’s Nursing Report
April 24-30 – World Immunization Week
May 5 – International Day of the Midwife; Hand Hygiene Day
May 12 – International Nurses Day
May 17-22 – World Health Assembly
June 21-25 – International Confederation of Midwives
September 17 – World Patient Safety Day
October 27-28 – Nightingale 2020 Conference
September 22 – United Nations General Assembly

Source: WHO, 2020.

Reference

World Health Organization (WHO). (2020). *Year of the nurse and the midwife 2020*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/campaigns/year-of-the-nurse-and-the-midwife-2020>



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