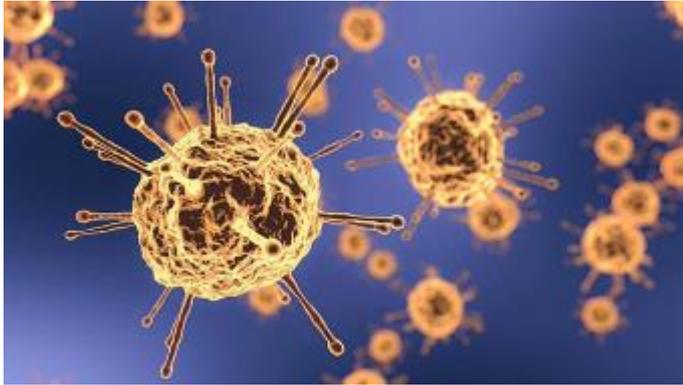




# COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION

e-News Vol.13 Issue 4 April 2020

## COMMONWEALTH CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) TRAJECTORY TRACKER



The Commonwealth Secretariat has developed a digital tracker of COVID-19 infections in Commonwealth countries. The tracker assists countries by providing accurate and timely data on which countries can base their responses to COVID-19 infections. The tracker collects data from the World Health Organisation and is updated daily. One of the graphs demonstrates COVID-19 infections in affected Commonwealth countries as a proportion of 100,000 population which is a much more useful figure than gross numbers. Another useful graph is one based on the revised projections of the International Monetary Fund on Real GDP Outlook for 2020-2021, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on economic activity, and assuming the pandemic peaks in the second quarter for most countries. The revised IMF forecast indicates that the economic downturn as a result of COVID-19 will be worse than what the world experienced during the Great Depression in the 1920s or the Global Financial Crisis in 2008-2009. To view the tracker, go to:  
<https://www.commonwealthsdgdata.org/>

## WHO COVID-19 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The WHO has developed short online courses in a range of languages for health workers to update their knowledge and skill to keep them safe. These courses are self-paced and free. Go to:  
<https://openwho.org/courses/>.  
There is also a wide range of guidance material which can be downloaded from the WHO website. Guidance material includes the Rights, Roles and Responsibilities of health workers; occupational health and safety; use of masks and PPE; and providing home care for people with COVID-19. Go to:  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>.

## COVID-19: NURSES AND MIDWIVES RESPOND

In the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, COVID-19 is bringing unexpected challenges. Across the world, nurses and midwives have been providing a professional response to the impact of COVID-19 on their populations and their country's health systems. The concerns currently being expressed by nurses and midwives across the Commonwealth reflect the issues they have been raising with their governments over many years.

- An under investment in the nursing and midwifery workforce which means there are insufficient nurses and midwives to deal with the current crisis. The recently released *State of the World's Nursing* report demonstrated a global shortage of 5.9 million nurses in 2018. When demand dramatically increases, the additional workload puts nurses and midwives at increased risk and decreases the quality of care they are able to provide.
- An under investment in nursing and midwifery education, both initial pre-registration education as well as emergency response preparedness training and training in infection prevention and control.
- A chronic under investment in health systems meaning health systems are not equipped to respond appropriately to emergencies. The Commonwealth Secretariat report that in March 2020, only eight Commonwealth countries considered they had sufficient capacity to deal with public health emergencies.

In the midst of an unprecedented inflow of information, some of it inaccurate, it is critically important that nurses and midwives keep themselves updated and informed. The best and most reliable source of information is the World Health Organisation. Every nurse and midwife should regularly access the WHO website for the latest information. Go to:  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>.

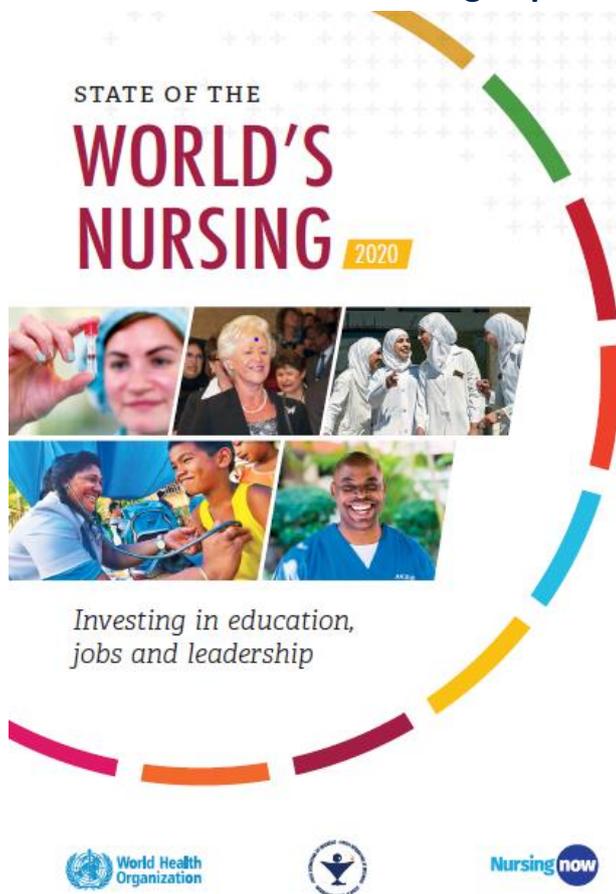
The WHO has also developed an app that can be downloaded to your mobile phone using WhatsApp that answers common questions, challenges inaccurate myths, and provides the latest numbers. To download the app go to: <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/who-health-alert-brings-covid-19-facts-to-billions-via-whatsapp>.



# COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION

e-News Vol.13 Issue 4 April 2020

## State of the World's Nursing Report



The long awaited *State of the World's Nursing Report* - the first report of its kind jointly sponsored by the World Health Organisation, the International Council of Nurses, and Nursing Now - has been released. The report notes that its release "comes as the world witnesses unprecedented political commitment to universal health coverage while at the same time, our emergency preparedness and response capacity is being tested by the current COVID-19 outbreak and mass population displacement caused by conflict". The report notes that nurses provide vital care in each of these circumstances and that now, more than ever, the world needs nurses to be working to the full extent of their education and training.

The report provides the most up-to-date evidence and policy options on the global nursing workforce and presents a "compelling case for considerable - yet feasible - investment in nursing education, jobs and leadership in order to strengthen the nursing workforce to contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, improve health for all, and strengthen the primary health care workforce on the journey toward universal health coverage."

The report estimates the global nursing workforce at 27.9 million of which 19.3 million are professional nurses. This confirms nursing as the largest occupational group in the health sector, accounting for approximately 59% of the health professions. The estimated global shortage of nurses in 2018 was 5.9 million with an estimated 5.3 million (89%) of that shortage concentrated in low and lower-middle income countries. The report maintains that for the world to achieve the global health agenda, concerted and sustained efforts to maximise the contributions of the nursing workforce are essential, requiring policy interventions that enable nurses to have maximum impact and effectiveness. The report outlines 10 policy options for countries:

1. Increase funding to educate and employ nurses.
2. Strengthen capacity for health workforce data collection, analysis and use.
3. Effectively monitor and responsibly and ethically manage nurse mobility and migration.
4. Adopt nurse education and training programs that graduate nurses who can drive progress in primary health care and universal health coverage.
5. Establish and support nursing leadership and governance.
6. Optimise the contribution of nursing practice.
7. Coordinate action in support of decent nursing work.
8. Deliberately plan for gender sensitive nursing workforce policies.
9. Modernise professional nursing regulation.
10. Collaborate across government ministries, health professionals, and the public and private sector.

The 2020 International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife and the release of the *State of the World's Nursing Report* provides an opportunity for nursing to engage with governments to commit to an agenda that will drive and sustain progress to 2030. Investing in nursing will enable countries not only to meet the health related SDG targets, but also SDG education targets, SDG gender targets, and SDG decent work and economic growth targets. The report maintains that all countries can take action in support of this agenda and that most countries can accomplish the policy actions listed above within their own resources. CNMF members are encouraged to develop a plan of action within their own countries.

To download the full report go to:  
<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/nursing-report-2020>.