2020 VISION: DEVELOPING A PAN-AFRICA EMERGENCY NURSING STRATEGY

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Aim

The project aim is to implement a harmonised theoretical and competence framework across the continent of Africa with key milestones for implementation over an extended timeframe.

National and international endorsement of systems and processes are necessary to enable clinical impact as African countries embrace agreed emergency nursing standards.
Rationale

Cross-country variation in:

definition of the nurse/emergency nurse role.
public health and emergency nursing requirements.
public health and emergency nursing practices.
emergency nurse knowledge.
emergency nurse competence.
“Emergency nursing is a speciality in which the nurse cares for patients in the emergency or critical phase of their illness or injury, focusing on the level of severity and time-critical interventions.”

“…no current consensus on issues of minimum level of education and training, delineation of roles and responsibilities, and/or effective staffing patterns for emergency nurses in Africa to enhance optimal patient outcomes.” (p1).

Challenges for emergency nursing

The African Federation of Emergency Medicine - Emergency Nursing Workgroup discussed challenges and issues faced in practice settings across the African continent comprising:

practice

education/training

professionalism.
Practice

- ENs work in a variety of settings: public/private, clinic/hospital/transport/pre-hospital.

- Emergency care settings are understaffed and nursing shortages exist across Africa.

- Shortage of doctors leads to task shifting to nurses with limited guidelines or standards.

- Undefined scope of practice for emergency nurses.
Practice

- Expectations of nurses to operate outside scope causes frustration.
- Emergency nursing has greater occupational health hazards.
- Ineffective processes e.g. triage protocols lacking or not followed.
- Lack of handover information from referral hospitals.
- Ineffective pre-hospital care.
Education and training

- Limited basic emergency knowledge and skills included in undergraduate nurse training programmes.
- Not all nursing programmes include rotation to emergency centres.
- Critical-thinking insufficiently addressed in training.
- Limited number of emergency nurse trainers.
- Many diverse and limited projects/training offered by public and private entities without guidance.
- Countries have standards for health professional training but not for specialised nurse training programmes.
Professionalism

- Diverse range of experience and educational backgrounds exist.
- Inconsistent terminology for levels of nursing across African countries.
- Disrespect and non-recognition of nurses by MDT.
- Emergency nurse specialty training is not reflected in remuneration.
- Nurse salaries are not always paid or paid on time.
- No safe staffing standards in emergency care settings.
- South Africa is the only professional organisation representing emergency nurses.
Action Plan
Strategic Direction 1

Pan Africa Emergency Nursing Database development.

Objective 1.1
Identify contacts in emergency nursing/nursing in each country that will forward names of potential people who will provide information regarding emergency nursing in own country.

Outcome 1.1
Database of contacts from each country: title of person, email, telephone, address.
Strategic Direction 1

Pan-Africa Emergency Nursing Database development.

Objective 1.2
Create a letter template to enable email delivery of a survey for completion by nominated person in each country.

Outcome 1.2
Database completed and survey delivered to nominated person in each country.
Strategic Direction 1

Pan Africa Emergency Nursing Database development

Objective 1.3
To develop a survey of required information regarding emergency nursing in each country (in collaboration with AFEM).

Draft survey forwarded to Professor Bysiewicz for review and comments.

Outcome 1.3
Refined survey delivered to the Database Team for Pan-Africa distribution.

(concurrently disseminating the free AFEM Handbook of Acute and Emergency Care in Africa).
Strategic Direction 2


Objective 2.1
Create a Pan Africa vision, mission and position statement on emergency nursing.

Identified individuals to engage in concept development.

Outcome 2.1
3 preliminary statements delivered to Professor Brysiewicz:
  Vision
  Mission
  Position.
Strategic Direction 3

Communications.

Objective 3.1
Enable cross-country dialogue regarding the Pan-Africa Emergency Nursing Strategy process.

Outcome 3.1
Open dialogue enabled via a live Facebook account and group email. (currently 44 AFEM nursing members and rising!).
Strategic Direction 4

Validate the Pan-Africa emergency nursing theoretical framework.

Objective 4.1
Establish the Pan-Africa theoretical framework for emergency nursing.

Review existing South Africa theoretical framework for emergency nursing.

Consultation document created by theoretical framework team.

Outcome 4.1
Pan Africa document drafted outlining theoretical domains of emergency nursing practice.

Validation of post-consultation document.
Strategic Direction 5

Validate the Pan-Africa emergency nurse clinical competence framework.

Objective 5.1
Establish minimum Pan-Africa clinical competence requirements for emergency nursing.

Country specific emergency nurse contribution to create a definitive list of basic, intermediate and advanced clinical competences (Benner).

Outcome 5.1
Basic, intermediate and advanced clinical competences defined. (currently established a list of clinical competencies, being verified by all).
Strategic Direction 6

Pan-Africa country specific analysis of emergency nursing.

Objective 6.1
Analyse country specific responses to the emergency nursing survey.

Outcome 6.1
Data load, clean and analyse country specific responses.

Report for consultation.

Dissemination via publication and conference presentation (Dublin 2014).
Items for consideration

Generated by African emergency nurses.

Evolving process.

Launch of strategic document containing cross-country analysis.

Centralised or de-centralised governance arrangements.

Timeframe for harmonisation of minimum theoretical and practice standards for emergency nursing across selected countries.

Setting the timeline from strategy to implementation.
Items for consideration

2020 Pan-Africa harmonisation may be ambitious.

Progress chasing by Prof Brysiewicz, T Heyns, Dr T Scott.

Short term expertise (Dr Tricia Scott, UK) to facilitate the Emergency Nursing curriculum review.

Consultation process (emergency medicine, pre-hospital, education, regulators).

Endorsement of final implementation document from global stakeholder organisations and agencies.
Impact

Increasing demand on emergency health care systems throughout Africa means that this initiative has huge potential to harmonise standards of emergency care for the benefit of African populations.
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