

CHARTER FOR CHANGE

**OUR NURSES.
OUR FUTURE.**

Value, protect, respect and invest in our nurses for a sustainable future for nursing and health care

Nurses provide care and leadership to address global health challenges everywhere, often at great personal risk. They are the essential life force for health, yet our healthcare systems worldwide have fallen short and failed to value, protect, respect and invest in this precious resource. The world has mistakenly taken nurses for granted, treating them as an invisible and inexhaustible resource. That must now stop for the sake of nurses and global health.

Nurses are key to healthier communities, responsive societies, thriving economies and powerful nations. Now is the time for policy makers, national and local decision-makers to take decisive steps to build and optimise an enduring, strong and sustainable nursing workforce. The International Council of Nurses' Charter for Change presents 10 policy actions that governments and employers must take to create and sustain health care systems that are safe, affordable, accessible, and responsive and shift nurses from being invisible to invaluable.

1

Protect and invest in the nursing profession to rebuild health systems that can deliver the Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Health Coverage to improve global health. Recognise and value health and health care as an investment not a cost. Secure commitments for investment to maintain equitable and people-centred care.

2

Urgently address and improve support for nurses' health and well-being by ensuring safe and healthy working conditions and respecting their rights. Put in place systems to ensure safe staffing levels. Ensure protections against violence and hazards in the workplace and implement and enforce international labour standards on the rights of nurses to work in safe and healthy supportive environments ensuring physical as well as mental health protections.

3

Advance strategies to recruit and retain nurses to address workforce shortages. Improve compensation for nurses to ensure fair and decent pay and benefits, and uphold positive practice environments that listen to nurses and provide them with the resources they need to do their jobs safely, effectively and efficiently. Fund professional governance, recognition and development activities across career trajectories.

4

Develop, implement and finance national nursing workforce plans with the objective of self-sufficiency in the supply of future nurses. Align resources to support a robust workforce to deliver essential health services, reverse unemployment and retain talent. When international migration takes place ensure it is ethical, transparent, monitored and delivers equal mutual benefits for sending and receiving countries as well as respecting the rights of individual nurses. Undertake system workforce planning and monitoring across the care continuum.

5

Invest in high-quality, accredited nursing education programmes to prepare more new nurses and advance career development for existing nurses. Design curricula so that nurses graduate with the right skills, competencies and confidence to respond to the changing and evolving health needs of communities and support career progression from generalist to specialist and advanced practice.

6

Enable nurses to work to their full scope of nursing practice by strengthening and modernizing regulation and investing in advanced nursing practice and nurse-led models of care. Reorientate and integrate health systems to public health, primary care health promotion and prevention, community, home-based and patient-centred care.

7

Recognize and value nurses' skills, knowledge, attributes and expertise. Respect and promote nurses' roles as health professionals, scientists, researchers, educators and leaders. Involve nurses in decision-making affecting health care at all levels. Promote and invest in an equitable culture that respects the nursing profession as leading contributors to high quality health systems.

8

Actively and meaningfully engage national nursing associations as critical professional partners in all aspects of health and social care policy, delivery and leadership as the experienced and trusted voice of nursing. Build local, national and global multilateral partnerships.

9

Protect vulnerable populations, uphold and respect human rights, gender equity and social justice. Place and uphold nursing ethics at the centre of health systems' design and delivery so all people can access health care that is equitable, non-discriminatory, people-centred and rights based, and without the risk of financial hardship.

10

Appoint nurse leaders to executive positions of all health care organisations and government policy making. Strengthen nursing leadership throughout health systems and create and sustain nursing leadership roles where they are most needed.



**OUR NURSES.
OUR FUTURE.**

International Council of Nurses

The economic power of care

