

ESNO Position Statement

Proceeding of the ESNO congress 2020

'Specialist Nurses and Professional Mobility in Europe'

Ten or twenty years ago, most of us could not have imagined the changes in healthcare we see today. Similarly, it is hard for most of us to imagine how healthcare will be in 2030. However, one thing has not really changed much over the last few decades: the role and status of the health professional. This has been particularly noticeable for the role of the specialist nurse.

Health care today and its main challenges

A decade ago, when the partner or spouse of a graduate nurse in a senior role and with decades of experience in a specific area got a job in another EU country, the nurse would struggle to move into a role in the new country. This often resulted in the nurse moving out of healthcare. In 2020, this has not improved. In some European countries, the barriers for nurses moving across borders have become greater, whereas some barriers have become embedded in European institutional rules.

The European professional qualifications directive, put in place in 2013, was designed to allow professionals free movement to live and work within the EU and to move more freely across EU borders. However, there are still remaining various gaps in policy making, such as addressing the future direction of nursing and nurses' professional mobility, and guaranteeing free movement in perspective of a shortage of nurses.

There has been a shortage of nurses since midway through the 1990s. This is jeopardising the provision of high-quality and sustainable healthcare. We need to accept that today's system, which is stable, certain, simple and clear from a national perspective, needs to shift as the world shifts towards volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) on a European level.

Future health care

If only national regulatory systems and national nursing associations are entitled to fill in those gaps, the credibility of the Professional Qualifications Directive¹ remains questionable. To meet the requirements of healthcare in 2030, national and pan-European institutions have to take brave measures to address the impact of these issues. Measures should include new competencies and roles for nurses in the future, as well as a common training framework (CTF) for specialist nurses.

The changes seen in healthcare over the past few decades affect a number of domains². These include a shift from:

¹<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32013L0055&from=EN#d1e466-132-1>

²Christensen, C. Harvard Business Review, 2000, Sep Oct ,
http://achc.org.co/hospital360/propuesta/Sincronizacion/Tecnologia_Disruptiva/Innovaciones_disruptivas.pdf

- a focus on mono disciplinary medical teams to an interdisciplinary multi-professional approach;
- passive patient roles to active, engaged and literate roles;
- a disease-oriented approach to a person-oriented approach;
- predominantly acute care to predominantly chronic care, related to the increased elderly population and having an impact on comorbidities;
- a reactive-based healthcare system to a proactive and evidence-based healthcare system, a focus on prevention;
- a fragmented health system with specialists working in siloes to an integrated care system;
- volume-driven and quantitative data to value-driven and mixed data, with a focus on quality of care.

Healthcare 2030 needs to bring in new roles and competencies. To do more and better with less will need integration and creation of new networks, partnerships, and health eco-systems. Our organisations and professionals need to be ready for transformation and innovation.

We strongly believe that investing in the recruitment and training of specialist nurses, while recognising their advanced role as nurse professional now and in the future is part of the solution to cope with this new reality. Hence, we urgently need a European-wide acceptance of the role and position of nurses with post-graduate qualifications in specialist roles, through the adoption of a common training framework and a common set of competences. This will allow all European countries to open their doors to qualified nurses from across the EU and to ensure their populations receives accessible, affordable, person centred and integrated care.

Call for action towards specialist nurses' recognition and mobility in Europe

As ESNO, we call on the European Commission, national regulatory bodies, and European and national nursing organisations to contribute to an improvement of cross border healthcare and professional mobility for nurses with post-graduate training and qualifications. This is required to break through the siloes and be ready for the expectations of Healthcare 2030. By formalising these processes, we will protect the future and enhance progress.

We urgently call health institutions; both regulatory and those representing national nurses, to open their doors and move beyond the status quo.

“A manager accepts Status Quo, a Leader challenges it” Warren Bennis

Brussels.

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The European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO) is a non-profit organisation with the goal to facilitate and provide an effective framework for communication and co-operation between the European Specialist Nurses Organisations and its constituent members. ESNO represents the mutual interests and benefits of these organisations to the wider European community in the interest of the public health. Members of ESNO consist of individual European specialist nurses member organizations and associates, both institutional and individual.

The organisation focuses on enhancing the capacity and capability of specialists nurses to deliver high quality healthcare by raising and harmonize specialist nursing education standards and actively contribute to health themes and threats, providing the best possible expertise, both national and in European cross border context.

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