

Engagement of nurses with human development policies

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1983-1447.2015.esp.61190>

Since the establishment of the millennium pact by the UN 15 years ago, endeavors to assess the achievement indicators for each of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been noted in recent years, in a wide range of sectors and, as would be the case, to map out a vision for the development agenda for the period following 2015.

The agreed initiative at the start of the millennium represented a consensus by the global community in regard to the value of health as an indispensable element for human development. And despite successes and limitations in achieving the eight goals established at the time, the relevance of health continues to be a crucial element in the negotiations of the Sustainable Development Goals comprising the post-2015 international agenda.

In the meantime, the world has faced various challenges driven by socioeconomic, political, geographical and humanitarian conditions; health issues emerged and have mobilized the community of professionals from the field in the search for global and local solutions.

Recognizing the value of the work of these professionals to achieve the set targets, the World Health Organization has sponsored discussions on the need for efficient and decisive services⁽¹⁾. Within the context of the large body of health professionals working synergistically, nurses share a mission to promote the health and well being of the population, by caring for individuals, families and communities. It is estimated that there are 19 million nurses and midwives in the world⁽¹⁾, whose significant global and local contributions are clearly evident in diverse ways, as they advocate for the rights of patients in relation to the Millennium Development Goals⁽²⁾, working in partnership with health leaders to ensure equal access to health services, the collection of health data that will fill in research gaps and the formation of public policies⁽³⁾.

Events, actions and movements have been successively documenting the efforts of nurses and midwives, such as the Declaration of Islamabad in 2007, which provided a common action platform to strengthen nursing and midwifery services⁽⁴⁾. As far as Brazil, there is the Ribeirão Preto Commitment to Action on Global Health, where health professionals led by nurses from twenty countries in over four WHO regions, during the international symposium on the globalization and social determinants of health, with implications for human resources and health systems, assumed the commitment to lead the way in the supply of primary health care, in accordance with the criteria of quality and safety, in order to train and develop skilled professionals for primary care and advanced practices, and to promote and disseminate knowledge and information to assist in the development of health systems⁽⁵⁾.

Also led by Brazilian nursing professionals, the X Conference for the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Development, held in July 2014, in Coimbra, Portugal, focused on the theme Contributions of Nursing and Midwifery to the Millennium Development Goals and health development – an event in which professionals and academics from various countries discussed the topic, presented research findings and shared actions that have been carried out. These actions and movements exemplify the capability of nurses to engage the theme and internationally adopted policies, demonstrating the dynamism, leadership and power of building consensus, collaboration, answers and positive proposals that health systems and health education can rely on,

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when it comes to mobilizing these professionals. Like the ones depicted here, and greater still, many others occurred throughout the duration of the UN pact, in different ways, such as thematic issues of journals among others, as is the case of the *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem*, which by dedicating a special issue to the theme also demonstrates its link with public policies, while also signaling priorities to researchers, professors and professionals, decision makers and policy makers.

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