Nursing the Planet, Caring for People: The Role of Nurses in a Changing World

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Introduction

The current world situations are increasingly unpredictable and complex, where traditional models and assumptions may no longer apply effectively. Health Care and Nursing System are not immune from this ever-changing world.

Introduction

Nurses are key advocates for health promotion, disease prevention, and environmental sustainability, recognizing the interconnectedness of planetary health and human well-being.

"Nursing the Planet, Caring for People" highlights the interconnectedness between environmental health and human health.

The lesson learned from last pandemic, highlights the crucial and evolving responsibilities of nurses as they respond to global health challenges and environmental issues.

Nursing the Planet: This refers to taking actions to protect and sustain the environment—such as advocating for pollution reduction, sustainable practices, and addressing climate change—because a healthy planet is essential for overall well-being.

Caring for People: This emphasizes the core role of nurses in providing compassionate, holistic care to individuals and communities to improve their health and quality of life.

Therefore, it suggests that caring for people goes beyond individual health—it also involves caring for the environment, recognizing that a healthy planet supports healthier lives. Nurses have a vital role in both aspects, promoting sustainability and ensuring human health in a changing world.

When mentioned about changing world, we always thinking about two popular terms VUCA & BANI

VUCA World
BANI World

THE TERM VUCA WORLD DESCRIBES A VOLATILE, UNCERTAIN, COMPLEX, AND AMBIGUOUS ENVIRONMENT. IT IS USED TO CHARACTERIZE THE RAPIDLY CHANGING AND UNPREDICTABLE NATURE OF TODAY'S GLOBAL LANDSCAPE. THE ACRONYM VUCA STANDS FOR:

Volatile

Rapid and unpredictable changes that can be sudden and fierce.

Uncertain

Lack of clarity and unpredictability about the future.

Complex

Multiple interconnected factors and variables that make understanding and decision-making difficult.

Ambiguous

Situations that are unclear or lack straightforward interpretation, leading to ambiguity and confusion.

Organizations, leaders, and individuals operating in a VUCA world need to be agile, adaptable, and resilient to navigate the uncertainties and complexities effectively. The concept originated from military strategy but is now widely applied in business, leadership, and global affairs

The term "BANI world" refers to a conceptual framework or environment characterized by four interconnected challenges: Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible.

The BANI model is often used in business, leadership, and societal discussions to highlight the need for greater resilience, adaptability, and distinction in navigating modern challenges.

Brittle

Systems or structures that appear strong but can break suddenly under stress.

Anxious

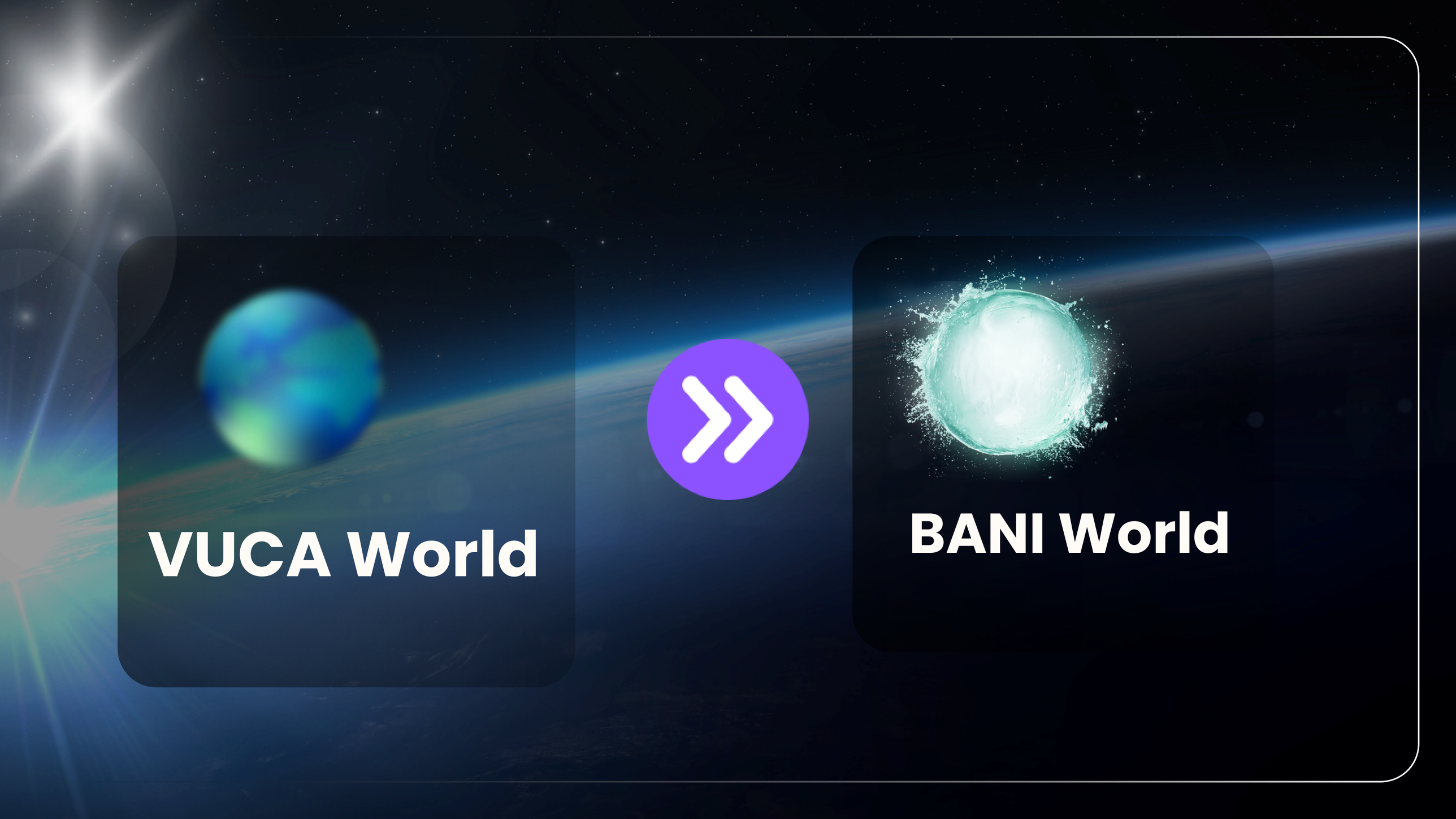
A pervasive sense of uncertainty and fear about the future.

Nonlinear

Events and consequences that are unpredictable and don't follow straight or proportional relationships.

Incomprehensible

Situations that are difficult to understand or make sense of due to complexity or chaos.


VUCA World
BANI World

Salford & Co.

KEY CHALLENGES IN A CHANGING WORLD

1. Climate change & environmental degradation
2. Pandemics & health emergencies
3. Health inequalities
4. Technological transformation
5. Global migration and urbanization

Overview of key issues affecting the Nursing workforce in Thailand

Nurse Shortage

- After COVID pandemic, 12% of nurses intended to leave nursing profession in a year.

- Shortage of qualified nurses and APN in the Primary care unit (PCU).

- HCS loses 4000 aging nurse population a year, not including other attritions rates.

- 60% of nurses works 16 hours/day.

-Very low overtime remuneration and poor welfare and low compensation for the holiday work.

Ratio of Nurse: Pop 1: 365 in 2023 (WHO ratio is 1: 270)
We expected to reduce the ration to 1:200 in 2033

Legal recognition of Nurse practitioner in Thailand 4-6 months training: Post BNS

Family NP, need 1:2500, currently, we have 1:5000
Emergency NP, need 12,000 for community hospital, we have only 3,000

Renal replacement therapy NP, need 12,000, but we have only 8,000
Eye NP is still very minimal.

Aging Workforce

In 2030, Thailand will have 20% of aging population.
We are not well prepared yet.

Inadequate Recruitment

Thailand can produce only 10,000 newly graduate a year.

We experiences 35% shortage of faculty member
(to keep the ration of nursing faculty member: student to 1: 6

The government has resolved this challenge by allocating a budget to produce 15,985 nurses during academic year 2023-2027 in the amount of seven thousand million baht. (206 million US dollars)

These budgets go directly to the public nursing schools.

OTHER KEY ISSUES

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WORKPLACE BURNOUT DUE TO OVER WORKLOAD:

- Nurses have faced long hours,
understaffing, and emotional strain
facing low wages and poor working conditions.

- Many nurses face long shifts and high patient loads, which further impact their well-being and job satisfaction.

- The government has attempted to address some of these issues, but systemic changes in compensation and working hours are still limited.

Health Care Demand

Need for Specialized Training: palliative care, geriatric care, and chronic disease management.

Career Advancement Opportunities:

-Career Development : opportunities for advanced nursing practice and specialization.

- Education and Training: Thailand has a solid nursing education system, but the country faces challenges in retaining experienced nurses in clinical settings due to a lack of career advancement opportunities, leading many to leave for administrative or non-clinical roles.

Health Care Demand

Trends of nurse migration and international mobility is increasing.

Technological Changes and Adaptation:

- Digital Health Literacy, Training and Utilization

- Digital Technology and AI in Patient Care

THE ROLE OF NURSES IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

The expanding scope of nursing roles, emphasizing their importance not only in individual patient care but also in promoting global health and environmental resilience. The role of nurses in a changing world is multi-faceted and increasingly vital. Here are some key roles they play:

1. Address health disparities and promote equitable access to care
2. Contribute to emergency response and disaster relief efforts
3. Advocate for sustainable healthcare practices to reduce environmental impact
4. Engage in health education to empower communities
5. Lead initiatives to combat climate change’s health effects

1. Address health disparities and promote equitable access to care

- Advocates for patients and communities
- Nurses champion health equity, ensuring vulnerable populations receive quality care and voice their needs.

2. Contribute to emergency response and disaster relief efforts

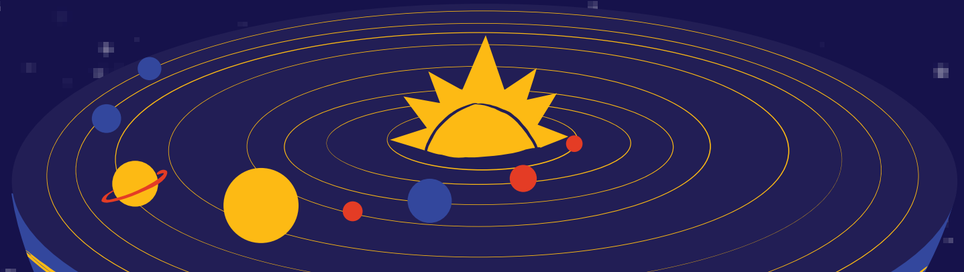
Nurses are responders to emergencies and disasters. They are on the front lines during crises such as pandemics, natural disasters, and humanitarian emergencies, providing immediate care and support.

3. Advocate for sustainable healthcare practices to reduce environmental impact

Nurses are promoters of sustainable healthcare. They implement eco-friendly practices within healthcare settings to reduce environmental impact and promote planetary health.

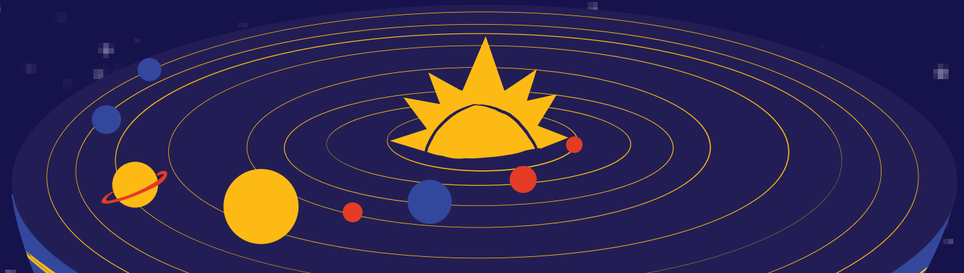
4. Engage in health education to empower communities

Nurses are health educators. They educate individuals and communities about disease prevention, healthy lifestyles, and environmental health, empowering people to make informed decisions.



5. Lead initiatives to combat climate change’s health effects

Nurses are in a unique position to lead initiatives addressing climate change’s health effects due to their trusted roles in communities, direct patient care, and knowledge of public health.



How nurses can take the lead to encounter climate change?

Nurses’ voice is essential to ensuring climate solutions prioritize health equity and human well-being.

-Educating patients and communities,

-Advocating for policies,

-Implementing sustainable healthcare practices,

-Leading research and evidence-based change,

-Collaborating across sectors.

1. Health Education & Community Engagement

- Raise awareness about climate-related health risks such as heat-related illness, respiratory diseases, and vector-borne illnesses.
- Promote sustainable behaviors (e.g., active transport, energy conservation, and plant-based diets) through health education programs.
- Engage vulnerable populations by helping them understand their risks and adapt to changing environmental conditions.

2. Advocacy & Policy Leadership

- Advocate for climate-conscious policies at local, national, and international levels.
- Participate in professional nursing organizations to shape environmental health policies.
- Collaborate with policymakers to integrate climate resilience into public health infrastructure.

3. Sustainable Healthcare Practices

- Promote “green” practices within healthcare settings (e.g., waste reduction, energy efficiency, sustainable procurement).
- Lead sustainability committees or green teams in hospitals.
- Develop emergency preparedness plans for climate-related disasters (e.g., floods, wildfires).

4. Research & Evidence-Based Practice

- Conduct or support research on the health impacts of climate change
- Use data to highlight disparities and guide targeted interventions
- Develop guidelines for climate-adaptive care in areas like chronic disease, infectious disease, and disaster response

5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- Work with environmental scientists, public health experts, urban planners, and educators to create holistic, community-wide climate health strategies.
- Integrate climate health topics into nursing curricula and training programs.

Examples of Nursing Leadership in Climate Action

- Leading vaccination and education campaigns during heatwaves or after floods.

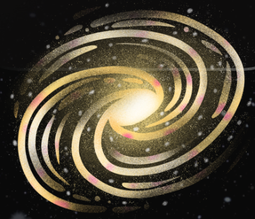
- **Coordinating mobile clinics during climate-induced displacements.**

- Designing climate-resilient health services for underserved communities.

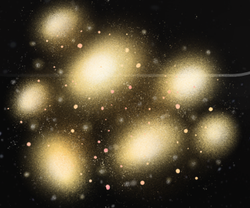
Additional leadership roles:

1. Research and Innovation: Nurses contribute to research that advances healthcare practices and addresses emerging health challenges influenced by environmental and social changes.
2. Policy Influencers: They influence health policies that promote equitable access, environmental sustainability, and improved healthcare systems.
3. Leaders and Mentors: As leaders, nurses mentor future healthcare professionals and lead initiatives that adapt to evolving health needs and technological advancements.

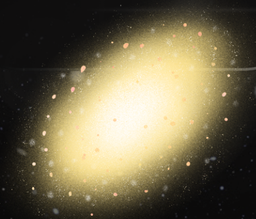
In conclusion, nurses are essential in shaping resilient, equitable, and sustainable healthcare systems for a rapidly changing world.



SPIRAL



ELLIPTICAL

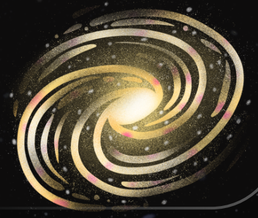


IRREGULAR

ICN Policies for Nurses in the Ever-Changing World

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) recognizes that nurses play a vital role in addressing global challenges in a changing world, including climate change, pandemics, health equity, and technological advances.

ICN has published several policy statements and position papers that outline nurses' responsibilities and rights in this evolving landscape.

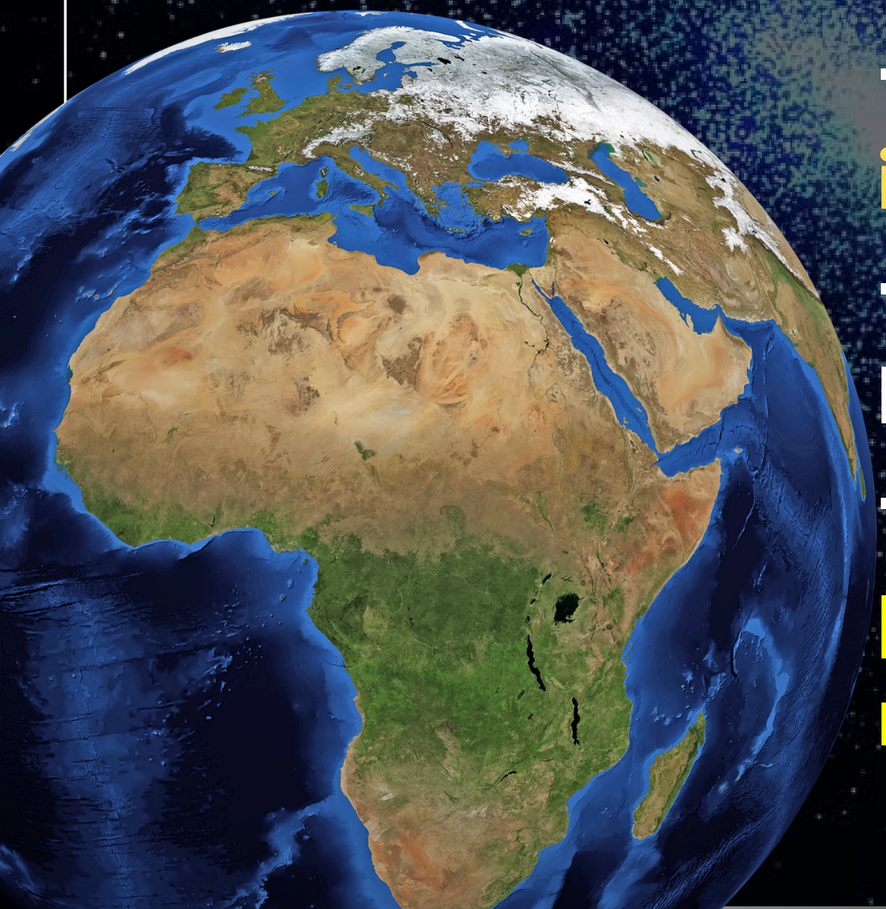


Key ICN policies relevant to nurses' roles in a changing world

1. Climate Change and Health Policy Statement: Nurses, Climate Change and Health (2021)

Nurses must be leaders and advocates in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

ICN encourages:



-Integration of climate health education into nursing curricula.

-Participation in sustainable healthcare initiatives.

-Advocating for climate justice and health equity.

-Supporting policies that protect populations most vulnerable to climate-related health risks.

Action Examples:

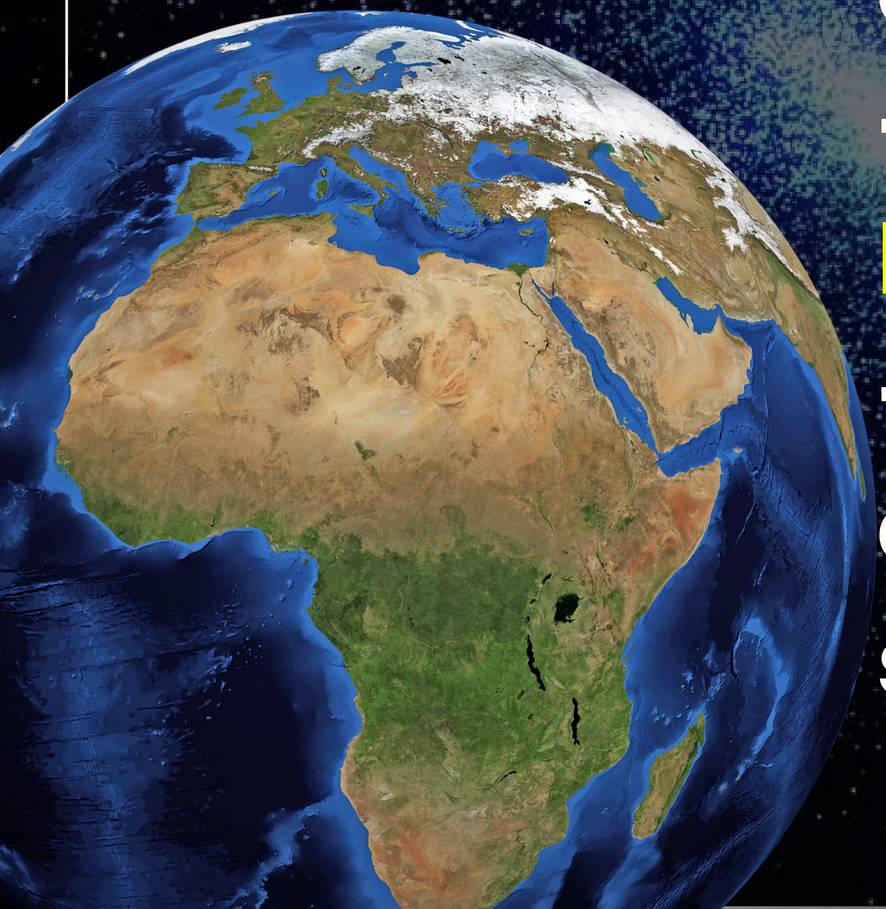
= Nurses must act as leaders in climate mitigation/adaptation
= Promote climate education in nursing
= Support sustainable healthcare practices
= Advocate for climate justice and vulnerable populations

🏥 2. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Health Equity

Policy Statement: Nurses' Role in Achieving UHC (2018)

Nurses are essential to expanding access to care and reducing health inequalities.

ICN calls for:



- Investment in nursing education and workforce.
- Leadership roles for nurses in health policy development.
- A focus on primary health care and community-based services.

Action Examples:

= Nurses central to achieving access and equity

= Invest in nursing workforce and education

= Expand nurse-led primary and community-based care

= Ensure nursing voices in health policy

3. Health in Emergencies and Disasters

Policy Statement: The Role of Nurses in Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response (2020)

Nurses are on the frontlines of crises—from pandemics to climate disasters.

ICN supports:

-Specialized training for emergency preparedness and response.

-**Nurse participation in planning and policymaking.**

-Protecting nurses' safety and well-being during crises.

Action examples:

= Train nurses in disaster risk reduction

= Involve nurses in planning and policy-making

= Ensure protection and support during crises

= Lead response and recovery efforts

4. Digital Health and Innovation

Position Statement: The Role of Nurses in Digital Health (2022)

Nurses should lead in the design, implementation, and evaluation of digital health solutions.

Key points include:

- Ensuring patient data protection and privacy.
- Using digital tools to improve access and efficiency.
- Developing digital literacy among nurses.

Action examples:

= Equip nurses with digital literacy
= Involve nurses in digital solution design
= Promote ethical use of data and tech
= Enhance access, communication, and care efficiency

🌐 5. Nursing Leadership in a Changing World

Policy Statement: Leadership in Nursing (2019)

Nurses must be empowered as leaders in clinical practice, education, research, and health policy.

ICN advocates for:

- Leadership development programs.
- **Representation of nurses in decision-making bodies.**
- Recognizing nurses as agents of change in achieving global health goals.

Action examples:

= Develop and support nursing leaders

= Ensure nurse representation in decision-making

= Recognize nurses as change-makers

= Invest in leadership education and mentorship

ICN's Vision for Nurses

ICN envisions nurses as:

1. Change agents in health systems transformation,

2. Leaders in addressing global challenges like climate change and pandemics,

3. Advocates for health equity and sustainability,

4. Innovators in digital health and care delivery.

Nurses as Agents of Change

= Empowered nurses drive sustainable health systems
= Advocate for environmental and social justice
= Lead innovation in care delivery and technology

Final Thoughts

Nurses are vital in responding to global health challenges

ICN policies provide guidance, advocacy, and structure

Leadership begins with awareness, education, and action

Q&A /
Discussion

References

ICN Official Website: https://www.icn.ch
ICN Policy Statements and Publications

THANK YOU