

HORATIO

The Representative Organisation for Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurses in Europe

European Nurses of the Future Need 12 Years General Education

The Bachelor level preparation, education and training of a dynamic Nursing workforce in Europe is essential to the provision of safe health services, education of the public and prevention of ill health. Nurses are both frontline healthcare professionals and also have a key role in the continuity of care. As the largest healthcare discipline, nurses can really make the difference in patient safety and effectiveness of preventive interventions and tailor made treatment in all domains of healthcare provision.. Horatio, European Psychiatric Nurses is committed to the delivery of the highest level of quality care and patient safety. We support the notion that Bachelor prepared nurses need 12 years general education before enrolling onto a nursing education program.To this end we wish to highlight the following facts :

1. 25 Countries in Europe already have arrangements in place to ensure that candidates have 12 years general education before commencing their nurse education and training. In modern healthcare the academic capacity of critical appraisal of the latest and relevant evidence of intervention choices and specific guidelines and codes of practice needs at least Bachelor education trajectory and should also give way to advanced nursing education program at Master level.
2. The European Commission in its proposals to update the Professional Qualifications Directive recommended 12 years general education. In doing so the Commission was reflecting the experience of the majority of Countries.
3. There is much research evidence to demonstrate that higher levels of nurse education patient will benefit in terms of better patient outcomes and improvement in patient safety and patient satisfaction. .
4. Current healthcare provision is characterized by complexity, increasingly technological and high therapeutic expectations. Nurses have a key role in guiding the patient and their families through this whole process.

5. Despite fears and even forecasts to the contrary, in countries where the standards of pre-nursing general education have moved to 12 years the numbers of enrolled nursing students have not fallen but increased. The nursing profession is well trusted by the public, some studies in different countries even reveal that they are in the top five of the most trusted professions. Therefore concessions on the entry level of Bachelor nursing studies are inappropriate. More and more specific services are nurse driven and prove to be cost effective and safe. Those services can only provide evidence based care if a substantial number of the staff are trained at Bachelor and/or Master level.
6. Research demonstrates that increases in the number of nurses holding higher education qualifications is associated with reductions in mortality levels (Aiken L. et al 2012).
7. The Commission's proposals are merely reflecting the reality of the broader European experience in the evolution of nurse education and practice.
8. The great majority of nurses are female. It would be regrettable if at this stage in its development the EU which has done so much to improve the lot of woman in society was now to make decisions damaging to this predominantly female profession.

Horatio, European Psychiatric Nurses represents hundreds of thousands of Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurses in Europe some of whom are educated at direct entry level, the majority at Postgraduate level. In helping our clients to deal with Mental Illness the 4th most common illness effecting our citizens we need our practitioners to be prepared to the highest levels .It is more than logical that we need potential nursing students to be prepared at the highest level based on twelve years of general education equipped and competent to complete their Bachelor program successfully..

Signed,

Des Kavanagh

President, Horatio

Roland van de Sande,

Secretary General, Horatio