Medical Xpress

New report suggests how to improve experience for overseas nurses in UK

April 4 2023

International nurses and
their initial integration
into NHS England's
healthcare workforce:
a population analysis

HWA
Health and Wellbeing Academy
University of Huddersfield

NHS
People Promise

How the experiences of nurses recruited from overseas can be improved at a time of unprecedented demand for their services is integral to a new report led by research by the University of Huddersfield.

The report, International nurses and their initial integration into NHS England's health care workforce: a population analysis, was commissioned by NHS England (North East & Yorkshire) and surveyed 655 nurses from 33 countries to understand their motivations for migration and their first four months experiences of living and working in England.

In recognition of the national health and care workforce shortage, international recruitment is being implemented across the NHS at size and scale. With the U.K. Government having set a target of 50,000 more nurses needed by the NHS by 2023–24, which is not likely to be met by domestic recruitment, knowing more about the experiences of the 30,000 international nurses currently in the NHS is vital.

"There are national toolkits being developed that are using our findings to form some of their recommendations and actions," said Professor Joanne Garside, Strategic Director of the University's Health and Wellbeing Academy.

Among its findings, the research revealed the population of international nurses were highly educated and vastly experienced, with career development and desires to improve quality of life being the primary motivations for migration.

'Many overseas nurses placed in roles that don't

match their experience'

Many however felt they were not being used in roles that matched their prior experience and qualifications, and that integration during their initial spell of employment was often found to be challenging. These and other factors from the research show why retaining international nurses is proving to be a challenge at time when the NHS needs nursing staff more than ever.

Later in the year, the University's project team will be publishing further NHS regional commissioned research studies: firstly, utilizing a solution focused approach the team followed the continued experiences of international nurses through the first two years working in the NHS in England.

The second commission was to undertake an observational study of NHS Horizons' "Stay and Thrive" project. This centered on a "community of action" and introduced the evolving evidence base, case study presentations and accounts from international colleagues. Solution-focused conversations were held between a broad range of participants working on the challenge of international retention at local organizational, regional, and national levels.

"Stay and Thrive was implemented within the North East and Yorkshire and the South West NHS regions of England, with the aim of providing learning opportunities and presenting a blueprint for action and some amazing results that could be grown and implemented nationally across other NHS systems," adds Professor Garside.

"It will be a portfolio of work that surrounds the experience of the international nurse working in the NHS. The University leads the way in this field of research, which given the current and future demands on the NHS, will only grow in importance," adds Victoria Bagshaw, Regional

Nursing Midwifery AHP Workforce Lead, NHS England—North East and Yorkshire.

  More information: International nurses and their initial integration into NHS England's healthcare workforce: a population analysis. [www.hud.ac.uk/media/assets/doc … rochure_Stg4_Web.pdf](http://www.hud.ac.uk/media/assets/doc)

Provided by University of Huddersfield