

# 19<sup>th</sup> Global Nursing Education Conference

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## Preparing nurses for an interconnected world: Current practices and future possibilities for nurses

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Globalization characterized by increased movement, interconnectedness, and interdependence on a worldwide scale pervades many aspects of our lives including health. Determinants of health, such as health services or living conditions, are influenced by globalization. Increased mobility has contributed to the rapid spread of communicable diseases. Nurses are confronted with a greater variety of diseases as well as linguistically and culturally diverse patients. Furthermore, impacts of complex global processes on the environment and the economy produce health inequities between and within countries. Global health issues such as maternal and child health or major diseases including HIV/AIDS and malaria are further examples of the complex problems nurses are confronted with in an interconnected world, either abroad or at home. Thus, the nursing curriculum of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must adequately equip tomorrow's nurses with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to respond to challenges of an increasingly globalized environment. There is some indication that international student mobility contributes certain educational benefits for nursing students, such as gaining knowledge of diseases which come from foreign to the home country; improvement of clinical skills; acquisition of communication and language skills; recognition of cultural, social, and economic influences on health care; influence on career objectives; self-development; confidence; and broadening experiences. Facilitating nurses' critical self-reflection for deeper understanding of motivations, inequalities, power-relationships, ethical issues, and impacts on the community must be considered to enable transformative learning from international placements. Despite growing interest in global health, there still exists a lack of global health focus within the nursing curriculum. There is no shared understanding of how a global health curriculum should look its contents or goals, or the competencies to be developed. Global health education has the potential to develop international and inter-cultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes in nurses.

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