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Integrating sustainability into nurse education: A survey among European nurse educators and professionals**Maud Huynen**

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Statement of the Problem: Based on the moral obligation to apply a health-in-all-policies approach, it is time that health systems become more environmentally responsible and sustainable. The involvement of well-informed nurses is crucial in facilitating this transition. Insights regarding nursing experts' view on 'sustainability in health care' and the integration of this topic in nurse education, however, are limited.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: We explored the perspectives on sustainability in health care among 52 European nurse educators and senior professionals, using a two-staged Delphi survey study. We assessed the most important reasons and barriers for integrating sustainability in nursing programmes. This survey also allowed for the assessment of the experts' opinion about the most important sustainability knowledge topics and skills to be included in nurse education.

Findings: Participants associated 'sustainability in health care' with both sustaining health care itself and environmental sustainability. Moreover, they believed a sound definition of sustainability in health care should combine both these aspect. The participating experts clearly believed that it is important to integrate sustainability-related education throughout nursing curricula. They considered this importance in order to educate future-fit nurses; to increase environmental awareness and decrease environmental impact; to promote healthy sustainable communities; to respond to changing CSR, professional and/or educational guidelines; and to recognize our moral responsibility. Important barriers included competing curriculum demands, lack of relevant knowledge among teachers, and the current limited inclusion in nursing standards. Survey outcomes provided the top 10 sustainability related knowledge topics and the top 10 sustainability related skills, based on expert ranking.

Conclusion & Significance: With proper sustainability-related training, nurses will be able to practice to the full extent of their skills and to take significant leadership roles in sustainable health care policy, planning, and provision. Hence, efforts to develop sustainability-related education for nursing programmes need to be urgently moving forward.

Biography

Maud Huynen is a Research Fellow at International Centre for Integrated Assessment and Sustainable Development, Maastricht University. She holds Masters Degrees in Environmental Health Science (2001) and Epidemiology (2003), and a PhD in Global Health (2008). She has been involved in several European and Dutch projects exploring the health impacts of climate change. She is currently working on the NurSus TOOLKIT project. The aim of this project is to "Enhance the availability/relevance of a sound learning offer in Sustainability Literacy and Competency (SLC) in nurse education by developing innovative teaching and learning approaches and materials".

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