Are Emergency Nurses really a priority in Asia?
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Overview

- What is the current state of nursing and emergency nursing in Asia?
- What is the role of emergency nurses and is this important in Asia?
- What are the challenges facing emergency nursing in Asia?
- What are the next steps?
What is the current state of Nursing in Asia?

- General nursing shortage
- Poor working conditions/pay/career progression
- Clinical nursing specialisation not supported
- Very limited opportunity for post graduate education
  - Aimed at producing nurse managers

Generally nurses are the largest health professional group within health organisations. (Table adapted from WHO, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Nurses/10,000 pop.</th>
<th>Doctors/10,000 pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>24.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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</table>
What is the current state of Emergency Nursing in Asia?

- Not recognised as a formal specialty
- Through the recent development of emergency medicine, emergency nursing roles have been created
- No formal postgraduate training
- Nursing education has not changed with the change in the burden of disease (increase in trauma)
  - Causes a gap between the purpose nurses were trained for and the purpose they are being utilised for.

What is the Current state of Emergency Nursing Education in Asia?

- In most countries nurses undertake a 3 year basic training course.
- Many are in nursing schools but some are making the move towards university training
- Most emergency nursing education is ‘on the job’ whereby new nurses learn from current nurses
- Often no updating of knowledge causing many practices to be outdated and new skills/knowledge is not gained.
- Many emergency nurses engage in short courses provided by internal and external agencies
What is the role of Emergency Nurses and why is this important?

- Emergency Medicine specialisation is being realised in Asia and emergency nursing needs to be developed along with it.
- Provision of advanced patient care
- Aid in emergency department functioning as a whole
- Perform Triage
- Provides for career progression

What is the role of Emergency Nurses – Emergency Department functioning

- Develop emergency department functioning as a whole
  - Patient flow
  - Role delegation
  - Equipment management
  - Patient advocate
  - Documentation
What is the role of Emergency Nurses - Triage

- Triage is a major component of emergency care
- Identified as among the weakest components of health systems in developing countries
- Nurses capable of performing effective triage
  - Nursing triage now operational in Galle Sri Lanka

What is the role of Emergency Nurses - Patient Care

- Caring for critical care patients
  - Greater technology
  - Advanced medical care
  - Little educational or clinical support for nurses
- Essential to optimise patient outcomes
Why is Emergency Nursing important - Specialisation and Career Development

- Greater recognition of nursing profession
  - May attract more to nursing career
- Provides a pathway for career progression
- May improve job satisfaction
- Potential for higher earning capacity
- Reduction of ‘brain drain’

How have Emergency Nurses improved emergency care in Sri Lanka?
Critical Care of Patients

Triage
What are the challenges facing Emergency Nursing in Asia?

- Funding
- Lack of leaders in Emergency Nursing
- Senior positions within hospital organisations and health ministries held by medical staff
- Gender
- Change of attitudes
What are the next steps?

- Role for developed world emergency nurses to lead the way.
- Increasing the awareness of the importance of the role of emergency nurses within Asia
  - Continued delivery of training programs
  - Exchange of nursing champions
- Development of post graduate curriculum in emergency nursing at university level
- Need to explore avenues for combined actions, special interest groups and funding both locally and within Asia

Conclusion

- Currently emergency nursing in many Asian countries not seen as a priority
  - Nurses performing the role of emergency nurse although not trained or recognised adequately as a specialty
- The growth of emergency medicine is creating the need for specially trained emergency nurses to clinically care for patients
- Emergency nurses acutely important in emergency department functioning and the performing of triage
- Emergency nurses need to step out of the shadow of emergency medicine and lead the way in specialty development.
Thank you