



UNDER THE AUSPICES OF H.E.
ABDEL FATTAH EL-SISI
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Looking beyond nursing education practice to include sustainable health-care systems processes

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Background

- ❑ Despite **Nightingale's** early introduction of the concept of the relationship to health and the environment(**Nightingale, 1859/1974**), sustainability is a new concept emerging in nursing. It is a multifaceted concept embedded within a systems framework and influenced by international, national, and local factors.
- ❑ **Nurses**, who dedicate their professional lives to making the lives of others and their communities better, have a natural fit with sustainability.



Sustainability and its goals

- ❑ The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In September 2015, world leaders agreed on **17 goals** and 169 targets.
- ❑ These goals covering a broad range of sustainable development issues for the world, such as ending poverty, hunger, improving health and education, combating climate change, etc. The 191 UN Member States have agreed to achieve these new goals by **2030**.
- ❑ Health has a central place in **SDG₃**: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all ages, and clearly nursing has a major role to play in relation to SDG₃.



Sustainability and its goals

- ❑ **Work of nurses has a major impact on the delivery of other SDGs such as education and poverty – these are often referred to as the social determinants of health (SDH).**

SDH

The daily lived circumstances affecting health. These circumstances include the socioeconomic and environmental context in which individuals are born and live across the lifespan. An individuals' home, gender, age, ethnicity and culture, religion, social support networks across communities, income, and place of employment.



The Importance of Sustainability in Healthcare

- **Environmental Impact**

The healthcare industry has a significant environmental footprint, from energy consumption to waste generation. Incorporating sustainable practices can help reduce this impact and mitigate the sector's contribution to climate change.

- **Cost Savings**

Sustainable initiatives, such as energy efficiency and waste reduction, can lead to substantial cost savings for healthcare organizations, freeing up resources to invest in patient care and community outreach.

- **Public Health Benefits**

A healthier environment translates to better public health outcomes, as sustainable practices can improve air quality, water management, and access to green spaces, all of which contribute to overall wellbeing.



Empowering Nurses as Agents of Change

Leadership

Empower nurses to take on leadership roles in sustainability initiatives, leveraging their unique position at the frontlines of healthcare to drive change.

Education

Equip nurses with the knowledge and resources to educate patients, families, and communities about the importance of sustainable healthcare practices.

Advocacy

Encourage nurses to advocate for sustainable policies and practices within healthcare organizations, as well as at the local, state, and national levels.

Innovation

Inspire nurses to develop innovative solutions that integrate sustainability into their daily practice, from waste management to energy efficiency.



Sustainability in nursing education

- ❑ **Nursing education** can have a direct and indirect role in influencing students to be change agents for healthier communities and realize the interconnection between local and global health as nurse educators integrate the SDGs across the curriculum. **The integration of sustainability principles into nursing education** is crucial for preparing future nurses to address environmental challenges in healthcare.
- ❑ **As faculty staff**, we have been encouraged to explore the concept of sustainability and how it relates to nursing practice. An in-depth review of the international literature, engagement of faculty colleagues, development of frameworks, and mapping of the educational content within the Bachelor of Nursing program, has led us to develop a model for conveying and teaching sustainable practice.



Climate change (SDG 13)

- ❑ **Climate change (SDG 13) is a prime example illustrating the need for an integrated curriculum approach. The wide-ranging effects of climate change affect all age-groups and exacerbate underlying chronic conditions in vulnerable populations. Nurses can play a role in mitigating the effects through conserving health care resources, helping patients to adapt to severe weather extremes, and helping communities develop climate resilience. The complexity of climate change and its impact on population health demands attention across the nursing curriculum similar to all other SDGs.**



13 CLIMATE ACTION



**Take urgent action
to combat
climate change
and its impacts**

*“Be the change you wish to
see in the world”*

Mahatma Gandhi,





Incorporating Sustainable Practices into Nursing Curriculum

1

Curriculum Integration

Weave sustainability concepts throughout nursing programs, from foundational courses to specialized electives, ensuring students develop a holistic understanding of the topic.

2

Experiential Learning

Provide opportunities for nursing students to apply sustainable practices in real-world healthcare settings, such as through internships, service-learning projects, and community outreach initiatives.

3

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Foster partnerships with other academic departments, such as environmental science and public health, to create interdisciplinary learning experiences that address the intersections of sustainability and healthcare.



Example of workshop approach

The Knowing, Valuing, and Acting framework proposed by **McKinnon and Fitzpatrick (2017)** offers a comprehensive, reflective approach to engage nursing faculty in integrating the SDGs and promoting global learning. The first part of the framework, “**Knowing**,” begins with determining baseline understanding of the SDGs. Nurse leaders, faculty, and students are queried about their knowledge of the SDGs and implications for the curriculum. Responses to the Knowing questions provide a baseline assessment for the next step in the framework, assessing the “**Value**” of integrating the SDGs into the curriculum. Finally, “**Acting**” focuses on the facilitators and challenges to curriculum revision as well as the actual process for making the necessary curricular changes.



Conclusion

- ❑ **Sustainability in nursing education involves integrating environmental awareness, climate change mitigation, and sustainable healthcare practices into curricula to equip nurses with the knowledge and skills needed to promote environmentally conscious care and lead the shift towards climate-smart healthcare.**
- ❑ **Nursing education plays a crucial role in shaping the future of healthcare. By incorporating sustainable practices into the curriculum, nursing programs can empower students to become agents of change, driving the industry towards a more environmentally responsible and equitable future.**



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