

New challenges for Community Nursing

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Community, public health and occupational health nursing although refer to different professional fields, have no scientific limits among them. They all cover a broad spectrum of nursing science.

Community health nursing includes preventive, curative and rehabilitative activities in the community. Mainly addressed to individuals, families and groups it contributes to the health care of the population as a whole.

Public health nursing incorporates knowledge from the health and social sciences to individuals and population groups through targeted interventions and programs. It translates and articulates the health and illness experiences and evidence based to health planners and policy makers.

Occupational health nursing services provided at the workplace to address the health care needs of working populations is an important component of the public health strategy. They contribute to the reduction of health inequalities, social exclusion, sickness absence and the overall burden of ill health. Occupational health nurses, as the largest single group of outpatient's health care have responded to new challenges related to National, European, International and World health and safety directives. They have raised the standards of their professional education and training, modernized and expanded their role at the workplace, and in many situations (referring to European Union members) they have emerged as the central key figure involved in delivering high quality occupational health services to the working populations of Europe and World Health Organization. The emerging occupational risks related to new technologies, immigration, demographic changes, work insecurity and unemployment impose the revision of the context and strategies of occupational health nursing.

Health is based on two axes: Individual's behaviors and state policies. Nursing as a human discipline has a critical role, to support people to adopt healthier attitudes. Nursing as a science has to contribute to evidence based policies. Within a changing physical, economic and social environment nursing science has to be continuously updated with research, education and development of new professional standards. There is a challenge in front of all us, individuals, academics, researchers and professionals of diverse fields to concentrate our actions in the behalf of the emerging social needs. We must work together to creating new tools, protocols and guidelines, sharing experiences, expanding good practices, evaluating methodologies, assessing needs and setting priorities. Primary health care and practice guidelines synthesize and translate high quality research evidence

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into recommendations for practice, and provide an easy and accessible tool for bridging the evidence-practice gap. For practice change to occur however, guidelines must be utilized, and their timely and effective transfer into community practice remains fragmented and inconsistent. *International Journal of Occupational and Public Health Nursing*, will be the floor for all those, who share the above views and are willing to contribute to the challenging role of nursing science.