



EUROPE

Vienna Declaration on Nursing in Support of the European Targets for Health For All, 1988

The participants at the European Conference on Nursing, meeting in Vienna from 21 to 24 June 1988, express the need for urgent action by governments and national health decision-makers to help nurses make the changes that are required in nursing if the regional targets for health for all are to be achieved, and hereby make the following declaration:

I

Health, which is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, is a fundamental human right. The attainment of the highest possible level of health is a most important social goal, whose realization requires the action of many professions.

II

The persisting inequalities in people's health status, both between and within countries of the WHO European Region, are politically, socially, economically and professionally unacceptable and are therefore of common concern to all nurses.

III

Having provided nurses from the 32 countries in the Region with their first opportunity to re-examine their role, education and practice, the Conference reaffirms the status of nursing as a force that can make a major contribution to achieving the 38 targets adopted by the Member States at the thirty-fourth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in 1984.

IV

The participants pledge to bring the new role of the nurse in the era of health for all to the attention of ministries of health, the organizations and trade unions of all health professions, regulatory bodies and other groups throughout the Region. Nurses should develop their new role by: acting as partners in decision-making on the planning and management of local, regional and national health services; playing a greater role in empowering individuals, families and communities to become more self-reliant and to take charge of their health development; and providing clear and valid information on the favourable and adverse consequences of various types of behaviour, and on the merits and costs of different options for care.

V

New attitudes and values need to be fostered among all health professionals, health care consumers and related groups that are consistent with the directives and principles of health for all and the primary health care approach. Nursing can best fulfil its potential in primary health care when nursing education provides a sound foundation for nursing practice, especially work in the community, and when nurses take account of the social aspects of health needs and have a broader understanding of health development. Policies should be adopted and activities identified to enable

nurses to practise with sufficient autonomy to carry out their new role in primary health care.

VI

Research to improve nursing practice along these lines should be encouraged through the creation of research policies and financial support. Such research should use human resources efficiently, and ensure the evaluation and use of its results. Nurses should also be involved in the research process.

See also the books on nursing in the WHO/Europe Publications Catalogue