

Demand for trained nurses will increase every year: FICCI-EY report

- Demand to be buoyed by the rising demand for tertiary and quaternary care
- India needs an additional 2.4 million nurses to meet the growing demand
- Report carves out 30 key suggestions to strengthen the nursing sector

New Delhi, 31 August 2016: The demand for trained nurses is expected to increase in the coming years, buoyed by the rising demand for tertiary and quaternary care in the country, highlights FICCI - EY report titled ***Nursing reforms: Paradigm shift for a bright future***, released today at FICCI flagship annual healthcare conference – FICCI HEAL 2016.

India ranks 75th amongst 133 developing countries with regards to the number of nurses, with only 0.7 doctors and 1.7 nurses available per thousand people. The country needs an additional 2.4 million nurses to meet the growing demand. Despite being a major supplier of the health workforce, the health care industry in India is suffering a wide gap.

The report notes that the nursing sector in India continues to experience challenges in terms of availability, distribution and retention, with the lack of a rewarding career progression, individual welfare, and income parity being cited as key reasons, amongst others. Additionally, alternative careers with better pay-outs and less stressful work environments and opportunities to migrate overseas tend to better attract nurses.

Vineet Chhatwal, Partner, EY India says, *“Nurses have a direct influence and role in determining the quality of care that is rendered to a patient. We need to make a concerted effort to ensure that this capability is recognized and rewarded in order to attract and retain qualified nursing professionals. A special emphasis has to be given to their continuous training and development for them to be able to leverage investments in initiatives such as digital health.”*

“A crucial segment of human resources in the health sector, there needs to be a focus on improving the participation of these professionals in the policy and decision making process, and special emphasis placed on their training and development in line with evolving technologies in healthcare. This will ensure a build-up of well qualified and skilled talent pool to meet the rising demand of nurses in the country.”

There is an urgent need for nursing transformation at the national and state levels in both the government and private sectors that can change the practice of nurses, expand current nursing roles while continuing to create new ones, and open up opportunities for nurses to participate in shaping the future health care delivery system. The report carves out 30 key suggestions to strengthen the nursing sector, which primarily deal with policy reforms, human resource development, strengthening the nursing practice, and education.

The report also highlights the need to revise the nursing curriculum - still governed by the Indian Nursing Act framed in 1947 and revised in 1948 – to make it relevant to the current health care industry requirements. Additionally, there exists a manpower skew and uneven opportunity of nursing studies across the country, with almost 52% of the nursing institutions concentrated in the south.

Nursing education needs to advance itself so that it remains competitive and relevant for the current technological environment, and rising customer centricity. This will also include opportunities for higher and specialized education, continuing nursing education and research and development, notes the report.

Weblink: http://ficci.in/spdocument/20756/FICCI_heal-Report_Final-27-08-2016.pdf

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