Nursing Now campaign engages global power

Elizabeth Adams focuses on international nursing and midwifery initiatives and activities of interest to INMO members

NURSING NOW is a campaign focused on raising the status and profile of nursing globally and maximising the contribution that nursing makes to universal health coverage, women’s empowerment and economic development.

Nursing Now is a programme of the Burdett Trust for Nursing and is a three-year global campaign launched in London on 27 February 2018 by the Duchess of Cambridge.

Nursing Now is run by a campaign board made up of nurses and non-nurses from 16 different countries. It is a privilege that Janet Davies, CEO/general secretary, Royal College of Nursing, nominated me to the board to represent the European Region. Therefore, I will serve on the board with the endorsement of the RCN while representing the INMO and the European Federation of Nurses Associations as president on behalf of three million nurses across Europe.

Nurses are at the heart of most health teams, playing a crucial role in health promotion, disease prevention and treatment. As the health professionals who are closest to the community, they have a particular role in developing new models of community-based care and support local efforts to promote health and prevent disease.

Nursing Now is based on the findings of the Triple Impact report, which concluded that as well as improving health globally, empowering nurses would contribute to improved gender equality – as the vast majority of nurses are still women – and build stronger economies.

Under the leadership of co-chairs Lord Crisp and Prof Sheila Tlou, and alternate chair Baroness Mary Watkins, the Nursing Now global campaign will build on the unique position of nurses as the health professionals who are at the heart of every health system, provide continuity of care for their patients and are part of their local community. The campaign aims to raise the status and profile of nursing globally so that it can make an even greater contribution to improving health and wellbeing.

With the first board meeting in January 2018 and the official launch of the Campaign on February 27, there is a real opportunity to position nursing more centrally to health policy and ensure that nurses can use their skills, education and training to their full capacity. The campaign seeks to:

• Influence policy and decision makers by demonstrating what nurses can achieve and advocating for specific objectives and goals
• Create a grassroots movement among the global nursing workforce to generate energy, boost morale and encourage recruitment.

Nursing Now will run to the end of 2020 – the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth and a year when nurses will be celebrated worldwide. The board
Nursing Now campaign leadership

Co-chair: Lord Nigel Crisp
Lord Nigel Crisp is an independent cross-bench member of the House of Lords where he co-chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Health. He was chief executive of the NHS in England from 2000-2006 and has subsequently worked and written extensively on global health with a focus on Africa. His main current interests are global health partnerships, health creation and nursing.

Alternate chair: Baroness Mary Watkins
Prof Watkins is a nurse academic who has held university posts, non-executive roles in the NHS and not-for-profit sectors. In December 2015, she was appointed as a Crossbench member of the House of Lords as Baroness Watkins of Tavistock. She has published extensively and presented at conferences contributing to debates on subjects ranging from nursing, the cost of social housing for NHS workers, public health and social care.

Co-chair: Prof Sheila Tlou
Prof Tlou is former UNAIDS Director of the Regional Support Team for Eastern and Southern Africa, and former Member of Parliament and Minister of Health of Botswana. She is also former professor of nursing at the University of Botswana and director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Development in Primary Health Care for Anglophone Africa. As Minister of Health, she led a very successful AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support programme. She holds a PhD in nursing science from the University of Illinois, Chicago, and has membership of the American Academy of Nursing and the US National Academy of Medicine.

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Background information on how this has evolved is available at: www.nursingnow.org/ and you can subscribe to the newsletter and register for updates in addition to actively participating in the campaign.

Elizabeth Adams is INMO director of professional development