

EDITORIAL

NURSES AND MIDWIVES AS GLOBAL AND GLOCAL LEADERS

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In the past two years during which the world has been fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of a global as well as glocal approach in health care has, more than ever during our lifetime, become crystal clear. The need for a global approach in health care as in any other area is pressing on us. Even if working and practicing locally, our views and approaches need to be global, in other words *glocal*. The term *glocal* refers to thinking globally while working locally (Wilson et al., 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as a wake-up call, an opportunity for us, the people of this world, to get together, be prepared, face facts, and save our planet for the future. Health care professionals, including nurses and midwives, are called to action to work and act in every way to preserve the planet's health as stated in *A planetary health pledge for health care professionals in the Anthropocene* recently published in *The Lancet* (Wabnitz et al., 2020). No one is exempt, all of us are responsible, whatever roles we hold, throughout our career and lifetime.

Nurses and midwives are identified as key leaders in health care around the world by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), and they must take this call seriously. Most nurses and midwives see themselves as local professionals serving their patients and close community, which they truly are, representing the core of every health care service. But even if “only” practicing locally, every nurse and midwife needs to become a global leader through their *glocal* approach. In their book *A New Era in Global Health: Nursing and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Rosa and co-authors (Rosa, 2017) depict the opportunities and responsibility of nurses to act as global leaders. As global leaders in achieving the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, nurses and midwives contribute to ensuring health equity and improved quality of life for all humans and the planet as whole.

Global leadership requires true partnership, cultural humility, as well as willingness to be open minded,

non-judgmental, and to grow professionally and personally (Bragadóttir et al., 2020). To become a competent global leader, one must learn, develop, and practice the skills of global leadership. Teaching, learning, and practicing a *glocal* as well as global approach may be done in various ways. Technology offers on-line collaboration between countries and cultures at low cost with multiple benefits. Collaborative online international learning (COIL) is a valid way of teaching and training health care professionals' global leadership, giving all students an opportunity for international exposure in their studies without costly travels (Bragadóttir & Potter, 2019). This way students become *glocal* leaders as they learn to think globally while acting locally. The more traditional way of participating in an international course where people come together in a common space may also be valuable for developing global leadership, not the least when the course assignment is on relevant challenging health care issues of today such as refugees and environmental matters (Bragadóttir et al., 2020). Working with health care professionals from another country and culture where the health care services and other structures of society are different from what you are used to, resolving a challenge concerning the whole world, is a perfect way to learn and practice a global approach in all respects.

Nurses and midwives are called to action as global leaders. Their role in the world is significant as there is nothing on this planet that does not concern their work. Their contribution to health care services during the COVID-19 pandemic is decisive, and so is their part in reaching the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals. By acting as both global and *glocal* leaders, practicing to their full professional potential, nurses and midwives will greatly contribute to better health and quality of life on our planet.

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