

NURSING TEACHING DEGREE: THE TRAINING OF NURSING TEACHERS FOR SECONDARY-LEVEL PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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DESCRIPTORS: Nursing, Education, Teachers, Professional education, Brazilian Unified Health System.

In addition to other political and material conditions, the workforce is essential to strengthen universal access to care, primary care, and comprehensive care, thus developing public care systems that ensure the right to health. This development is based on the conception of health as a public good that has been challenged by the advance of neoliberal policies.

An editorial by The Lancet¹ presented data from reports on the situation of nursing

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and midwifery in the world, produced by the World Health Organization, the International Council of Nurses and the International Confederation of Midwives marking the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. The publication focused on the importance of the work of nursing and midwifery in fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the provision of universal health. Emphasis goes to the global Nursing Now campaign, which increased investments in the workforce and professional training².

Nursing comprises the most numerous global contingent in the health sector, representing 59% of the professions³. In Brazil, nursing professionals represent about 70.2%⁴ of healthcare providers.

In the Americas, there are nurses, technologists, technicians and aides whose training differs in terms of duration and the provision of courses at the tertiary or secondary level. In Brazil, in addition to nursing schools, there are also training courses for secondary-level nursing technicians and nursing aides. The last two, which represent the majority of the nursing team, are trained as part of a curriculum included at the secondary education level.

The performance of these workers impacts whether the healthcare needs of the population are met, considering the prerogatives of the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS) grounded in the precepts of the health reform, which is opposed to the predominance of professional training by the private network.

There are ethical-political and technical challenges to training technical workers in a way that is consistent with a project of health, education and society in which human dignity guides democratic and egalitarian social processes. Among these challenges, there is the performance of nursing teachers. It is important to emphasize the importance of their training, especially in undergraduate nursing teaching programs.

Bachelor's teaching courses in Brazil differ from those in other countries in that they train teachers to work with basic education. The training of health technicians is a modality of this level of education, called Secondary-Level Technical Professional Education. The nursing teaching degree, part of the Bachelor's degree, trains nursing teachers to work in health services and to train technical professionals. Therefore, these courses integrate the fields of knowledge of health and education.

Bachelor nursing teaching degrees have existed since the late 1960s and are the only regular program provided, having been offered for more than 40 years. These programs accompany the political and legal movements of the education of nurses and teachers and, when coupled with political struggles, have the potential to resist initiatives that work against training that is based on socially referenced quality, which improves comprehensive care and the emancipation of workers.

In terms of political struggles, it is worth noting the constitution of the National Forum of Nursing Teaching Degrees, formed by coordinators and teachers. In 2016-2017, professors of these courses significantly contributed to the movement to propose the new National Curricular Guidelines for Undergraduate Nursing Programs, coordinated by the Brazilian Nursing Association, related to the training of nursing teachers for Secondary-Level Technical Professional Education with solid and socially committed theoretical bases.

However, the training of nursing teachers is not considered, naively, a solution to the problems that face this modality of teaching, but part of an emancipatory process that can promote the critical analysis of society, without which a position in favor of social transformation would be impossible.

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HOW TO REFERENCE THIS ARTICLE:

Corrêa AK, Clapis MJ, Rodrigues RM, Conterno S de FR. NURSING TEACHING DEGREE: THE TRAINING OF NURSING TEACHERS FOR SECONDARY-LEVEL PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION. Cogitare Enferm. [Internet]. 2022 [accessed "insert day, month and year"]; 27. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5380/ce.v27i0.87086>

Received: 09/12/2021

Approved: 08/03/2022

Associate editor: Luciana Puchalski Kalinke

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ISSN 2176-9133



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