Internationally Qualified Nurses’ Challenges

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Internationally qualified nurses bring a variety of knowledge, skills, values and experience to their new practice areas apart from bringing with them culture that match the cultural diversity of patients.
Why do nurses migrate?

- social, cultural (Alonso-Garbayo & Maben, 2009; Kingma, 2008)
- historical, educational (Choy, 2003)
- political, economic, lifestyle (Benson & O'Reilly, 2016)
- legal influences (Freeman, Baumann, Blythe, Fisher, & Akhtar-Danesh, 2012; Massey et al., 1993).

- Hernandez, 2019, unpublished work
Approximately 3 out of 10 (27% of 52,711) of New Zealand’s overall practising nurses are IQNs.

- Other European - 33%
- Filipinos - 28%
- Indians - 20%
• younger than most nurses; 45% of IQNs under 40 years of age

• 32% of IQNs aged 50 or older

• more males among IQNs - 52% of all practising male nurses in NZ are IQNs
• IQNs are represented in all healthcare areas

• Most could be found in Continuing Care - 47%, Obstetrics/Maternity - 40% and nursing for people with intellectual disabilities - 37%

• Predicted to make up 50% of RNs in continuing care by 2025
What do you think are the challenges that IQNs in New Zealand face?
IQN transitioning challenges - What research says

- Social
- Language & communication
- Cultural displacement & adjustment
- Marginalisation, discrimination and racism
- Professional

Physical
What research says

- Socio-cultural differences and social relations, social networks & coping
- Separation from family & culture, and adaptation to new physical environment & cooler climate of New Zealand
- Race, gender, and culture bias, including stereotyping and outright injustice such as bullying
- Language and its subtleties - idioms, acronyms & abbreviations aggravated by unfamiliarity with the accent, language nuances and socio-cultural context
- Cultural uprooting & perception of “not belonging” and interpersonal conflicts due to differences in culture-based values, norms & expectations
- Pre- & post-nursing registration issues, socio-cultural differences in healthcare environment, role & expectations, scope of practice, legal environment, deskilling, accountability, professional autonomy, health care technology & organizational structure
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What research says

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Language & communication
Cultural displacement & adjustment
Physical
Marginalisation, discrimination and racism
Professional

Cultural uprooting & perception of “not belonging” and interpersonal conflicts due to differences in culture-based values, norms & expectations
The Cultural Iceberg

Easy to see
- Language
- Folklore
- Fine arts
- Dress
- Literature
- Food
- Holidays and festivals

Difficult to see
- Beliefs and assumptions
- Self-concept
- Core values
- Relation to authority
- Body language
- Beauty ideals
- Manners
- Interpretations
- Family roles
- Core values
- Core values
- Family values
- Gender roles
- Attitude toward school
- Approach to health and medicine
- Concept of cleanliness
- Attitude toward the environment
- Competitiveness
- Pride
- Concept of justice
- Humor
- Approaches to health and medicine
- Notions of modesty
- Rules of conduct
- Competitiveness
- Humor
- Attitude toward the environment

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What research says

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- Cultural displacement & adjustment
- Physical Marginalisation, discrimination and racism
- Professional Pre- & post-nursing registration issues, socio-cultural differences in healthcare environment, role & expectations, scope of practice, legal environment, deskilling, accountability, professional autonomy, health care technology & organizational structure.
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Socio-cultural differences and social relations, social networks & coping

Physical

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Social

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- Marginalisation, discrimination and racism
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What IQNs really mean

OLD
- Close social relations, other relations
- Economic
- Politics

NEW
- Physical Environment
- Family
- Culture
- Professional/Healthcare system
- Self
“In the society where the migrant works, his/her past is fundamentally irrelevant as the society presumes a stereotypical past for all workers in a given occupational category ... without a relevant past, the labour migrant also has no status apart from that dictated by the labour process and the occupational category as perceived by the locals. ... His/her sense of place has no fixity and the worker joins other labour migrants ... who are collectively marginalized into social invisibility.”

- Migration scholar F. V. Aguilar
IQNs navigate multiple worlds – the old and new, internal and external, self and others.
Recruitment and retention of IQNs

**Acquaintance**
- Screening and interview process – should have clear understanding of new country, role, system for psychological preparation
- Post-orientation – arrival and orientation to country or workplace, community, system and processes; characterised by high activity, euphoria, fascination; regression to ‘novice’

**Indignation**
- Cultural, professional, psychological dissonance
- Culture shock, psychological discomfort focussed on separation, isolation and what they left back home which manifest physically and psychologically
- Unfulfilled hopes may lead to frustration, apathy or protective isolation
- Support group and counselling

**Conflict Resolution**
- Focused emotion and futuristic decision-making
- Most decisive in retention outcome
- Support group and counselling

**Integration**
- Lessened tension, renewed enthusiasm, emerging concern for co-workers
- New sense of community life for those who stayed
- Those who view the situation as temporary have less organisational involvement

- Pilette, 1989
To understand IQNs

The first thing you do is to forget that we are IQNs

Second, you must never forget that we are IQNs

(adapted/borrowed from the poem – For the white person who wants to know how to be my friend – by Pat Parker, 1979)

Pat Parker (1944-1989) black poet, feminist & activist
Be KIND to IQNs.

This is "I Viaggiatori" a sculpture by the artist Bruno Catalano, symbolizing the void created by leaving one's country, one's family, one's people for another life.


Jenkins, B. & Huntington, A. (2016). "We are the international nurses": an exploration of internationally qualified nurses’ experiences of transitioning to New Zealand and working in aged care. Nursing Praxis in New Zealand, 32(2), 9-20.


