
The Year of the Nurse and Midwife: an effort worth joining?

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Editorial

The World Health Organization has designated the year 2020 as The Year of the Nurse and Midwife in tribute to Florence Nightingale who was born 200 years ago. The decision to dedicate a whole year to nursing and midwifery has not been made only to remember and celebrate the founder of modern nursing. It was made to recognize the importance of these caring professions for global health and the health care systems and for society as a whole.

There is no doubt that nurses and midwives worldwide will embrace the Year of the Nurse and Midwife and will use it to reflect on the past, present and future of their work, think about the challenges they have faced and the achievements they have accomplished. There will be events to remind ourselves and others why we have become nurses and midwives and to contemplate on how we can advance our professions for the health and wellbeing of the people.

What does the Year of the Nurse and Midwife mean for nurses and midwives in the Kurdistan Region? It provides an opportunity, a possibility to move away from the status of stagnation and raise to the challenge of finally reforming the system of nursing and midwifery and establishing them as legitimate professions with the vital role to play in the improvement of the health care system in the region.

It can not be denied that over the last decade there has been some progress despite the country facing political, economic and social difficulties. We have seen that nurses and midwives have resilience and

determination to cope with challenging times and that there are many who look to the future and work hard to improve the current situation.

However, more is needed. Nursing and midwifery services in the Kurdistan Region have been based on routine functioning for years and attempts for change have been largely unsuccessful. Why? There is a myriad of reasons ranging from the legislative and regulatory vacuum and outdated governance structure, lack of leadership and unity within the professions themselves, to the difficulties with organizational effectiveness and professional competence of individual nurses and midwives.

The Year of the Nurse and Midwife provides us with the perfect opportunity to thoroughly and formally assess where we are now and seriously consider where we want to be and how to get there. We should not forget that we are not alone. There is a global community of nurses and midwives whose experience and support is invaluable for our own development. All we have to do is look, listen, learn, create, and apply within our own context, frame our efforts into a powerful message, find our voice, and ways for that voice to be heard.

Isn't it an effort worth joining?

"Nurses Are The "Bridge" Of Healthcare
In January of 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) had a meeting where the director-general of the W.H.O., Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, made the official proposal to declare 2020 the year of the nurse and the midwife.