

## More nurses are needed in Mexico

According to OECD, the ideal rate of nurses available for a thousand of inhabitants is 8.8. In Mexico, we barely have three professionals for one thousand inhabitants, while in Cuba the rate is eight

In the framework of the International Nurses Day, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria pays homage to more than 300 thousand nurses that work in Mexico, we acknowledge their effort during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many times their lives were at risk to save somebody else's.



In Mexico there is a deficit on nursing staff, as we only have 2.88 nurses available for one thousand inhabitants; when the ideal rate that was established by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is 8.811. That was mentioned in the essay "Coronavirus 2020: The situation of nurses in Mexico based on the specialized magazine 'Cuidarte'".

On May 12 we commemorate the International Nurses Day, in the midst of a situation that allowed this profession to recover its value, due to the fact that they had to make big efforts during the sanitary contingency caused by COVID-19 as nurses put their lives at risk every day in order to protect the others.

Nevertheless, the pandemic also revealed that nurses are needed in Mexico, especially if we compare the numbers with Cuba, where 8 nurses are available for one thousand inhabitants.

It is important to recall that the National Survey on the Public Acceptance of Science and Technology (ENPECYT) 2017, posted on the website of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), that nursing is considered as one of the most respectable professions, just after firefighters and inventors; in that precise order.

"Part of the actions to be made to strengthen the health system in Mexico consist of paying attention to the deficit of healthcare staff, mainly nursing staff, through the creation, update and implementation of public policies in health focused on the creation of human resources. Nurses are crucial in the health system, they are the key to respond to any sanitary emergency, and the way to overcome different challenges regarding health, like the universal health coverage", the document states.

### A profession with history in Mexico

In the study "Brief History of Nursing in Mexico", it is mentioned that the ones injured in combat were assisted in the tuihuacan (hospital) by men who were nurses; in the meantime, women also practiced nursing, specially to assist while babies were delivered. They both were known as *ticitl* that meant "the man or woman who assists sick people".

During the Colony, many religious orders assisted sick people. Some of the tasks that nurses did, took place in hospitals and jails. They earned 50 pesos per year and to work in this profession they did not need any credential or permission.

On February 9, 1907, the School of Nursing was opened. During the Mexican Revolution, nurses participated in assisting people being hurt in the battle.

The Health School in Mexico was founded in 1922, and it was the origin of the one currently known as the School of Public Health in Mexico (ESPM), part of the National Institute on Public Health, that allowed the professionalization with a perspective on public health due to the first course they offered called "visiting nurse" in 1925 to 31 students.

That generation and the ones that followed, received training to fight mortality on children mainly, and they participated in health campaigns focused on the combat to infectious diseases, and to promote hygiene measures.



### In numbers



The profession of nursing has 28 million members around the world.



38 percent of those professionals are under 35 years old, and 17 percent are over 55 years old.



One out of every six professionals will retire in approximately 10 years, a fact that increases the current lack of professionals, which is 5.9 million around the world only.



It is estimated that the American continent has 30 percent of the nurses in the world, they represent 59 percent of the people working in the healthcare sector, showing this a big difference compared to the numbers in related professions.

24 percent of professionals in the American continent are over 55 years old, being this the highest percentage around the world, a fact that has an impact on the fight against COVID-19 in this region; and it also increases the lack of nursing staff.



### CMT and health

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria, A.C. (CMT) in the Network of Health in its Welfare Ecosystem Model, develops integral solutions for health professionals, considering nurses in that sector, to have the infrastructure and supplies they need to develop their functions successfully.

The Network of Health is divided in four sub networks. The first one is infrastructure for health, which not only allows the increase the number of buildings specialized on Primary Care, but also the improvement of the ones we already have.

The second sub network is called "Supplies and Equipment for Health" that aims to provide prostheses, orthopedic appliances, hearing aids, wheelchairs, crutches, vehicles, ambulances, stretchers, specialized supplies and many kinds of medication (except the controlled ones), mobile medical units, etc. All those will allow the increase and improvement of the services provided, with the objective of granting access to all the people to high-quality and efficient assistance.

In the subnetwork Drugstores to get Welfare, CMT designs proposals so that medical units get enough medical supplies to the performance of their functions. On the other hand, the sub-network Co-responsible Medical Tele-Assistance aims to become an option for people living in distant municipalities difficult to get to, and despite that fact, provide them with medical assistance services.

The above-mentioned essay provides data taken from the Management Information System of Nursing Human Resources (SIARHE) about the number of people working as a nurse in Mexico before the pandemic, making a total 301 thousand 246 professionals in 2019, but in 2020 the number increased to 311 thousand 298 health professionals who are currently working in all the healthcare systems in the country.

"Currently, the healthcare system in Mexico owns those numbers to face the pandemic, revealing a considerable crisis caused by the deficit of professionals in health to face the demand and to assist infected patients, a fact that becomes a risk to their physical and psychological integrity", the analysis mentions.

The essay suggests that the pandemic forced the society to pay attention to the healthcare systems around the world, therefore, many international agreements were established to promote health and welfare on human beings. Only in Mexico we observed the vulnerability of the health system and all the aspects we need to work on in order to assist all the people and to guarantee universal health coverage, besides we must be prepared in every single aspect in case we have to face another sanitary emergency like the one we are currently going through.