

Editorial

Seldom “Nursing” is seen as a separate profession on par with medical profession; though it is equally important and distinct in its role. The block is mainly with everyone’s mindset. As part of the health sector reform, a separate **Directorate for Nursing Administration** is the proposition. **Why?**

Firstly, the sheer size of the Nurses cadre in the overall Human Resource capital in any State makes practical sense that they be given responsibility to manage themselves with accountability. The National Rural Health Mission since 2005 has added 80,086 ANMs and Nurses and 9856 general duty doctors and specialists making the Nurse’s cadre strength 242,210 in the country which is more than seven times the doctor’s strength of 33,714. It is sheer logic that any large workforce requires an administrative structure from bottom to top for better communication and line of control.

Secondly, another justification for a separate Directorate is the Cadre complexity. Under the umbrella of nursing, there are three different and distinct cadres such as:

- a. *Public Health Nursing Personnel - ANMs, LHV’s, PHNs, DPHNOs*
- b. *Clinical Nurses – staff nurses, specialized nurses, head-nurses, departmental supervisors, matrons, nursing superintendents*
- c. *Teaching Cadres – clinical instructors, tutors, lecturers, associate professors, professors*

A separate Directorate can bring all nursing personnel – clinical, teaching and public health under one unit of administration. At present nurses work under different directors for medical

education, family welfare and health services with no coordination of professional activities or information sharing or mutual support.



Further, having a separate Directorate is not an impractical idea but demonstrated successfully by the West Bengal Nursing Service which is unique and distinct and is responsible for all aspects of nursing administration such as training, postings and transfers, appraisals and promotions, service information which are maintained well and readily available when needed.

Finally, clubbing of Nursing with the proposed National Council will again go against the principle that nursing is a separate professional entity rather than one of the paramedical disciplines.

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