

Health workforce research theme | Thailand

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| Title | Public and private nursing schools in Thailand: role and contributions in a dynamic system |
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Background

The critical shortage of nurses is a major barrier to the effective functioning of health systems in many countries. As demand grows with aging populations and higher levels of chronic disease, in low and middle income countries shortages in the supply of nurses is exacerbated by international migration. In Thailand, the Nursing and Midwifery Council has projected a shortage of 50,000 nurses by 2020. To meet this gap, there is a need to increase the number of nurses being trained. Private training institutions offer one potential route to expand the supply, however, little is known about these institutions and how they fit into the health system.

Purpose of the research

The study aims to:

- Describe government policy and the regulatory environment within which public and private nursing schools are operating and how these influence the institutes' behaviours and outcomes;
- Compare characteristics of public and private nursing schools in terms of their institutional dimensions, their instructional dimension, and their student body;
- Compare the outputs of public and private nursing schools measured as (a) nursing competency, (b) attitudes towards work in rural health services, and (c) job preferences.

The results will feed into the development of policy recommendations to encourage public and private nursing schools to be more responsive to health needs of the population.

Study methods

The study will use a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. Methods include:

- A cross-sectional survey of nursing students from 40 public and private nursing institutions
- Document and literature reviews
- In-depth interviews with 30 key informants including from the Ministry of Public Health, private and public training institutions, and representatives from the Nursing Council.

Related research

Descriptive audits of training institutions will also be carried out in Kenya and Uganda. These will examine the emerging role of private nursing schools, and how they compare with public training institutions in terms of resources and financing, teaching staff and exposure of students to rural community health.

Publications

Reynolds J. et al. The role of the private sector in the production of nurses in India, Kenya, South Africa and Thailand: a review of the literature. *Human Resources for Health* 2013, 11:14

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