

A REVIEW OF THE POST-REGISTRATION MIDWIFERY CURRICULUM IN SRI
LANKA: DO WE MEET INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF EDUCATION?

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ABSTRACT

Post-registration midwifery training is one year programme, and the only one of its kind, available for registered nurses aiming to become Midwifery Trained Registered Nurses (MTRNs) in Sri Lanka. Although high quality training in maternity care is recognized as imperative to provide maternity care in hospital settings, there has not been any formal evaluation of this training programme in Sri Lanka. The aim of this paper is to examine how and whether the post-registration midwifery curriculum (PRMC) in Sri Lanka compares with international standards of midwifery education for registered nurses. Through document review and interviews with key informants in Sri Lanka and outside, information about the length of the program, content, proportions of theoretical to practical content, and the skills and competencies developed in the PRMC were compared, using checklists, with the curricular recommended by the International confederation of Midwives (ICM) and WHO Europe and post-RN midwifery curricula from Sweden, Ireland, Japan and Korea. The review of curricular demonstrated a wide variation in terms of the length of the program, amount of content on maternity care covered the ratio of theoretical to practical content, and the range of skills and competencies to be attained by the student during the training. The findings also show that the curriculum lacks a substantial grounding in a theoretical foundation, and as a result, fails to develop competencies in other nursing roles such as educator, counselor, leader, advocate and researcher. The local PRMC does not meet the ICM requirements recommended for safe maternity care delivery. The PRMC should be reviewed and revised to meet international standards of education as an important component of the MTRNs' training in Sri Lanka. Recognizing the gaps in the existing program and the MTRNs role as

valued members of the maternity care team in Sri Lanka, would be the first and most important step in achieving this goal.

Keywords: - post-registration midwifery; safer high quality maternity care; nurses; model curriculum