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## **BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

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## NURSING EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA: NEW DIRECTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

In Sri Lanka, pre-registration nursing education is currently based on a three-year diploma level nursing program in schools of nursing that are attached to the Ministry of Health and four-year bachelor programs in nursing at universities. Understanding of the evolution and existing situation of nursing education in Sri Lanka provides perspective on the origins of current successes and dilemmas, and enables the development of strategies and plans for future trends in the profession. The purpose of this review was to explore evolution and existing situation of nursing education and its impact on developing professionalism in nursing in Sri Lanka. The literature search was conducted using MEDLINE, CINAHL and limited to articles in the English and Sinhala languages publication until 2015. Personal communication, unpublished reports and government records and web sites were used to obtain information on nursing education in Sri Lanka. This review revealed several published research studies and reports and this paper discusses the evolution and existing situation of nursing education and its impact on developing professionalism in nursing in Sri Lanka. Major challenges for the nursing profession in Sri Lanka are discussed with some recommendations, enabling the identification and development of an appropriate policy direction. It can be concluded that there has been considerable delay by the profession in asserting their professional status within the health sector. There has been minimal effort to improve the standards of nurses' education, due to inadequate and disjointed involvement of those who are responsible for improving the health services in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** nursing education, nursing, Sri Lanka