

The Role of Nurses and Midwives' Self-Government in Postgraduate Education in Poland

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Abstract : In the Polish health care system, nurses and midwives are obliged to regularly update their professional knowledge. It is all regulated by the Law on the nurse and midwife's profession and the code of ethics. The professional self-governing body (County Chamber of Nurses and Midwives) is obliged to organize ongoing training for them so that maintaining accessibility and availability to the high quality of educational services could be possible at all levels of post-graduate education. The aim of this study is an analysis of post-graduate education organized by the County Chamber of Nurses and Midwives in the city of Katowice, Poland, as a professional self-governing body operating in the area of Silesian province inhabited by almost 5 million citizens which bring together more than 30 thousand professionally active nurses and midwives. In the years 2000-2017, the self-government of nurses and midwives trained over 50,000 people. The education and supervision system over the labour of nurses and midwives establishes exercising control by a self-governing body. In practice, this means that conducting activities aimed at creating legal regulations and organizational conditions, as well as the practical implementation of courses, belongs to the professional self-government of nurses and midwives. The most of specialization courses that were provided from their own funds came from membership fees. The biggest group was participants of specializations in the fields of cardiac, anesthesia, and preventive nursing. The smallest group of people participated in such specializations as neonatal, emergency, and obstetrics nursing. The most popular specialist courses were in the fields of the electrocardiogram and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, whereas the least popular were the ones in the fields of protective vaccinations of neonates. So-called 'soft training-courses' in the fields of improvement of social skills and management were also provided. The research shows that a vast majority of nurses and midwives are interested in raising their professional qualifications. Specialist courses and selected fields of qualification courses received the most concrete attention. In light of conducted research, one can assert that cooperation inside the community of nurses and midwives provides access to high-quality education and training services regularly used by a wide circle of them. The presented results exemplify a level of real interest in specialist and qualification training-courses and also show sources of financing them.

Keywords : nurses and midwives, ongoing training, postgraduate education, specialist training-courses

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