

JNA News Release

Japanese Nursing Association

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<http://www.nurse.or.jp/jna/english/index.html>

President's Message



I have served as JNA President for five years and seven months, and only have five months remained at the office. My goal as the President was to establish new criteria for the staffing ratio of nurses, and to reform basic nursing education. In 2006, a new basic hospitalization fee was introduced in the medical fee system, and standard patient-to-nurse ratio was raised to 7:1. In 2009, a bill for the partial revision of the Act on Public Health Nurses, Midwives and Nurses passed the Diet in order to reform basic nursing education. In Japan, a bill is usually proposed by the government and voted. In the case of the revision in 2009, JNA took the initiative in lobbying to the ruling party, resulting in the enactment of the bill introduced by a project team of voluntary Diet members. I am proud of this revision, which was pushed forward and achieved by ourselves. During the remaining months at the office, I would like to continue efforts toward the improvement of nurses' working environment and the expansion of the scope of practice, and prepare for these efforts to be taken over by the next president and bear fruit in the future. At the ICN Conference slated for May 2011 in Malta, I will have an opportunity to make a presentation at the session "Shaping and Evaluating Health and Nursing Policy". I hope to share my experience on nursing policies that I have had as JNA President, with nurses from all over the world. I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Malta. ■

Day Shift and Night Shift Hours of Nurses

JNA has considered it important to protect the health and safety of health care professionals, in order to ensure the health and safety of patients. Therefore, JNA has worked for the improvement of nurses' working environment, and led lobbying to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and other agencies toward appropriate working hours. At present, efforts are in progress toward the establishment of a regulation to relieve the load of shift work by nurses.

At the end of December 2010, the MHLW set up an internal project team (PT) aimed at improving the working environment of nurses, and seeks to review their night shift hours etc. Although, hospital associations and other stakeholders have announced objection to the establishment of a PT dedicated to nurses, and to reducing their night shift hours, JNA looks forward to the outcome of the PT and follows its discussion. ■

■ Background of nurses' working environment in Japan

According to a survey by JNA, reasons for nurses to leave their job are categorized into personal reasons, such as marriage and giving birth, and reasons due to the working environment. The typical examples of the latter include long working hours and overtime, load of night shift, and difficulty in taking leaves. According to the same survey, 57.9% of nurses who work in three shifts experienced, during the one month before the survey, a midnight shift starting within six

hours after the day shift. This means that they continued working all day and night without sufficient rest. The survey also revealed that more than 4.3% of shift workers did overtime for 60 hours or longer per month. It is critical to establish baseline criteria for working hours to relieve extreme physical and mental stress of nurses, who are required to maximize their abilities under continuous tension around the clock, thereby ensuring safe health care services. ■

JNA Code of Ethics for Nurses

On its website, JNA published an English version of the Code of Ethics for Nurses, which JNA presents as the bases for nurses to make appropriate ethical decisions. JNA created the Code of Ethics for Nurses in 1988, considering that it is one of the prerequisites for a profession to have professional

code of ethics to discipline own practice. The Code was revised in 2003, because the situation surrounding nursing profession changed substantially, as healthcare practice became more advanced and complicated, and people became more conscious of their rights for health care. ■

The 2nd Japan, China and Korea Nursing Conference

On November 20 to 22, 2010, the 2nd Japan, China and Korea Nursing Conference was held in Tokyo. This conference had been held between Japan and China originally, to which Korea joined in 2010. Under the theme "Role Expansion of Nurses and Improvement of Professional Status", nursing associations from Japan, China and Korea made presentations, 63 oral presentations and 89 poster presentations were made. 199 nurses from Japan, 29 from China and 81 from Korea respectively deepened their relationship at the conference and banquets. The third conference will be hosted by the

Korean Nurses Association, and scheduled on October 2011. ■



The ICNWFF was Held

On September 16 and 17, 2010, the ICN Work Force Forum was held at JNA's building. In addition to the delegates of Japan and five other countries, two countries participated as observers. Due to the economic downturn since the fall of 2008, influence was reported on the employment, payment and

pension of nurses. Opinions were exchanged on common issues in working conditions, including the regulation of working hours, bullying at workplaces etc. Two guests from Japan made respective speeches on "the future outlook of health, labor and welfare policies in Japan", and on "impact of the economic downturn".

Questions and opinions were exchanged as to the government's expenditure that remains high despite the financial deficit, the low unemployment rate, and other issues. ■

Nursing in Japan

Q. Is there a regulation concerning the night shift of nurses?

In 1965, the National Personnel Authority determined that the night shift of a nurse should be kept eight times a month on the average, which has been a numerical target for the number of night shifts of nurses. In 1992, the Act on Assurance of Work Forces of Nurses and Other Medical Experts was established. Although the basic guideline for this act, "Basic Guideline concerning Actions for Promoting the Assurance of Nurses and Other Medical Experts", provides "within eight times a month", this is only a guideline and hardly legally binding. Allowance for night shift work by nurses is stipulated by the rules of the National Personnel Authority.

News Topics in Japan

Fact-finding survey on nursing practice

September 27: The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare overviewed the results of the fact-finding survey on nursing practice at the Nursing Practice Review Working Group. Scatter diagrams for each survey item clarified that both physicians and nurses are proactive in the medical acts performed by nurses.

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/shingi/2r9852000000sk2r-att/2r9852000000sk5k.pdf>

Change in curriculum credits for public health nurses and midwives

October 4: The Review Meeting on the Content and Method of Nursing Education of MHLW formulated a proposal to increase required credits from 23 to 28 in the education curriculums to become public health nurses and midwives. In the curriculum to become public health nurses, in particular, programs were added to train students on various roles of public health nurses, because the Review Meeting considered that students could not reach the required baseline before graduation in the present basic education. The relevant ordinance was issued by MHLW on January 6, and the new curriculums will take effect on April 1, 2012.

Elimination of restriction on the years of working by foreign nurses etc.

November 30 Foreign public health nurses, midwives and nurses who are licensed in Japan had been subject to a restriction on the years of working in Japan; within four years of licensing for public health nurses and midwives, and within seven years of licensing for nurses. The Ministry of Justice revised the relevant ordinance and eliminated this restriction on the years of working.