

COUNTRY REPORT

GHANA ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANAESTHETISTS
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EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

The educational programme of the nurse anaesthetists school has been revised. Managerial skills and project work in the form of research, psychology and sociology have been added and as a result of these successful students are now awarded higher diploma instead of certificate in anaesthesia.

Currently the government, the ministry of health and the universities are discussing the possibility of introducing nurse anaesthetist course in the universities as a degree programme.

ENDORSEMENT OF IFNA STANDARDS

The Ministry of health and the Ghana Association of nurse anaesthetists fully endorse the IFNA Standards of practice and code of ethics.

The GANA was privilege to have Sandra and Marian in Ghana to further enlighten us on the IFNA standards of practice and code of ethics.

SALARIES

The salaries of the nurse anaesthetist in Ghana are still on the low side. The salary ranges between (310 - 510 USD) monthly. This is however better than the general nurse who receives between (240 - 450USD).

WORKFORCE

The general workforce of medical staff has reduced drastically.

In the beginning of 2005 there were about 201 nurse anaesthetists nationwide. But recent report from the ministry of health indicates that about 10% of this number left the country at the close of 2005. This tells us the rate of Exodus of nurse anaesthetists. The percentage is even less as compared to the Doctors and other categories of nurses. Out of the number remaining only 101 nurse anaesthetists are active with the national association.

NURSING POLICY, PROMOTION AND INCLUSION

For now, nursing specialties have influence in the promotion to higher positions especially in the decision making levels.

Previously more emphasis was placed on long service in choosing personnel at decision making levels. But now the emphasis is on the specialty areas.

CURRENT ISSUES

The main current issue is the salaries levels which the government has to work on. The government under took the assessment of job description of all health workers in order to come out with new salary structure. But the implementation has still not been effected. This issue of remuneration might have accounted for the increased exodus of health personnel to other countries especially the U.K. and U.S for greener pastures.

The GANA still has problem of getting volunteers to serve on the board or to do anything for the association. There is gross lack of interest from members and this has retarded the progress of the association.

Some nurse anaesthetists rather get into other businesses and sometime do locum in order to generate extra income to supplement their salaries.

The GANA has therefore started educating the newly qualified nurse anaesthetists on the need to get involved in the association. It is our hope that with time more nurse anaesthetists will come on board.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The biennial conference/continuing education were organized in 2005. There were representatives from other organization like the Ghana registered nurse association, Ghana Medical Association and many others. The relationship with these bodies are very cordial. We often come together to dialogue with the government for improve conditions of service. The association intends to organize annual conferences regionally instead of biennial conference. We believe by this, members could come together more often.

UNION ACTIVITIES.

Quite recently the nurse Anaesthetists and the health workers except the Doctors were on strike to demand for better remuneration.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE NATIONAL ORG.

Means of communication among members is a great concern for us. GANA cannot boast of a single newsletter for its members. The information from IFNA and its activities is usually done by written or verbal report to members.

OTHER ISSUES

Educational – The 37 Military School of anaesthesia has finally been established and the first batch of students (15) is now serving horsemanship.

The nurse Anaesthesia School in Kumasi still has limited facilities like lecture halls, teaching aids, computers and hostels.

Continuing education still remains a matter of great concern for us. Most of the members are working in rural hospitals and often get rusty with time. It would be necessary if refresher course is organized at least once a year for such members. It would be appreciated if IFNA assists in this area. It would also be appreciated if exchange programmes are encouraged among IFNA member countries .

The association was privilege to get support from IFNA in 2005 to organize the biennial conference/continuing education for it members. Infact it was a fruitful meeting.

Sandra and Marian graced the occasion and indeed it was splendid to have them.

Governmental- The government is encouraging the private sector to establish nursing training school in order to avert the acute shortage of nurses. It is our hope that as more nurses are produced , more will get into the anaesthesia schools. We hope that through private sector participation, more nurse anaesthetists schools will be established in the

country. Currently the government of Ghana has introduced a capitation grant to all primary schools. This programme seeks to provide financial support to schools as school fee for the pupil in the primary levels. This has helped increase the enrolment of pupil in the primary schools.

The government is also embarking on school feeding programme where pupils in the primary schools are fed once a day by the government.

Concerning the 8th world congress, few members (4) is seriously soliciting for assistance to enable them participating come June, 2006. The association is not financially sound to sponsor the country representative. The association is therefore relying on companies for support.

The GANA wishes to express its gratitude to IFNA for the support to organize the conference/continuing education. We are so grateful. It is our hope that such assistance and support will go a long way to uplift the image and activities of nurse anaesthetists in Ghana.

Long live GANA

Long live IFNA

Thanks.