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ICN Calls for Positive Practice Environments to Ensure Quality Patient Care

Geneva, 12 May 2007 – Based on the conviction, supported by evidence, that quality health care workplaces provide quality patient care, ICN has launched a global call to address and improve the serious deficiencies currently existing in the health work environment in all regions. The delivery of safe, high quality and efficient health services depends on the competence of health workers and a work environment that supports performance excellence. The ongoing underinvestment in the health sector in many countries has resulted in a deterioration of working conditions. This has had a serious negative impact on the recruitment and retention of health personnel, the productivity and performance of health facilities, and ultimately on patient outcomes. Positive practice environments (PPE) must be established throughout the health sector if national and international health goals are to be met.

“The goal of ICN’s call for positive practice environments is to improve the quality of health services through health care work environments that support performance excellence,” declared Hiroko Minami, President of ICN. “We believe patients and the public have the right to the highest performance from nurses and other health care professionals. This can only be achieved in a workplace that enables and sustains a motivated, well prepared workforce.”

ICN has brought this issue to light on the occasion of International Nurses Day, with the publication of an information and action toolkit entitled, “*Quality workplaces = quality patient care*”. The toolkit is designed to raise awareness and stimulate action, and can be used by managers, front-line nurses, chief executive officers, professional associations and/or regulatory bodies. It provides data on positive practice environments to all health stakeholders who are interested in improving the delivery of quality services. The toolkit has been distributed to all ICN member associations and to nursing representatives worldwide. It can be accessed online at www.icn.indkit.htm

The establishment of positive practice environments will continue to be a priority programme in the years to come, both for ICN and its recently launched International Centre for Human Resources in Nursing (ICHRN). The goal of ICHRN is to improve the quality of patient care through advancing nursing and health care services and promotional activities for positive practice environments will be supported by the data, tools and standards found on its website (www.ichrn.org).

Editor’s note

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) is a federation of 129 national nurses' associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses for nurses since 1899, ICN is

the international voice of nursing and works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

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