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Joint Statement by NSA : European Nursing Students' Association (ENSA)

Agenda item : Agenda item 3
The Second European Programme of Work, 2026-2030 – « United Action for Better Health » (EPW2)

This statement is suggested by ENSA. European Nursing Students' Association (ENSA) is a non-state actor and the only organization representing nursing students in the WHO European Region.

The mentorship of nursing students is a critical component in ensuring the quality of education and the preparation of future nurses. Quality mentorship enables nursing students to acquire solid clinical skills and professional confidence, thereby meeting the public's expectation for timely, reliable, and affordable healthcare delivered by qualified providers.

1. Support and Training for Mentors

Mentors play an essential role in guiding nursing students. Thus, it is imperative to provide them with appropriate academic training, including communication skills, stress-management, and psychological support. Continuous professional development programs should be implemented to equip mentors with the tools required to offer quality guidance to students. Moreover, mentors' voluntary participation is crucial, as it reflects their genuine commitment and intrinsic motivation to support the training. This voluntary approach fosters a more authentic and beneficial mentor-mentee relationship, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the learning process.

2. Promoting Clinical and Professional Leadership Through Mentorship

Mentorship offers a unique opportunity to develop leadership among nurses. Mentors must serve as models of clinical excellence and professional ethics. By integrating leadership modules into mentorship education, institutions can prepare nurses to assume management and leadership roles in the future, such as nurse manager or educator, which contributes not only to the student's professional development but also to the evolution of the nursing profession.

3. Recognition and Valuation of Mentorship Roles

To encourage participation in mentorship, it is crucial to officially recognize this role. Universities and healthcare institutions should offer incentives such as professional development opportunities or financial rewards. This recognition contributes to valuing mentorship and attracting experienced professionals to engage in this capacity.

4. Development of a Mentorship Evaluation and Feedback Framework

To ensure the effectiveness of mentorship programs, standardized evaluation tools should be developed. These tools will help assess the quality of mentorship and identify areas for improvement. Students should also have access to structured feedback systems, enabling them to share their experiences and contribute to the continuous enhancement of mentorship programs.

5. Expansion of Peer Mentorship Programs

Peer mentorship, where students mentor fellow students, is an effective approach to strengthening the sense of community within the nursing profession. Universities should establish or support this project, organized by a nursing students' association, as a peer-mentorship framework allowing experienced students to support newcomers throughout their academic journey.

To conclude, integrating the mentorship of nursing students into the EPW2 framework is a strategic move to bolster the healthcare system in the European Region. By investing in mentor training, recognizing mentorship roles, and developing effective mentorship structures, the WHO and its Member States can ensure the optimal preparation of future nurses, thereby enhancing the overall quality of healthcare services.