

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY ADVERTISING FEATURE

A lifesaving nursing force

NURSING

THERE is a global shortage in the numbers of nurses across the world, according to the World Health Organization. With International Nurses Day celebrated worldwide on May 12, it is a chance to reflect on the vital work being carried out by health professionals, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to WHO, the world needs 9 million more nurses and midwives if it is to achieve universal health coverage by 2030.

"Nurses play a critical role in health promotion, disease prevention and delivering primary and community care. They provide care in emergency settings and will be key to the achievement of universal health coverage," WHO stated.

Investing in nurses and midwives is good value for money.

The UN High Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth concluded that investments in education and job creation in the health and social sectors deliver a triple return in



DAY TO RECOGNISE NURSES: International Nurses Day will be celebrated on May 12, 2021. Photo: SHUTTERSTOCK.

improved health outcomes, global health security, and inclusive economic growth.

Investing in midwifery, where care covers maternal and newborn health as well as for family planning, could

avert over 80 per cent of all maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths, according to WHO figures.

Nursing and midwifery represents the largest female workforce in the world.

Nurses and midwives account for nearly 50 per cent of the global health workforce, and 70 per cent of them are women.

From ancient Egypt to today's modern hospitals, mid-

wifery has played a vital role in the development of medicine, especially for women.

A derivative of an old English word meaning "with woman", a midwife's duties can start even before con-

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ception, providing guidance and support for women hoping to fall pregnant.

Modern midwives are armed with a wide skill set to provide many services, supporting women through pregnancy and birth and extending support to the family when the baby arrives.

Midwives Australia, a leading not-for-profit organisation, says the work of midwives to provide lasting health benefits for women, their babies and families, is now being more widely recognised. International Nurses Day is the perfect time to celebrate the work of nurses and midwives.

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