

## Issues and Trends in Global Health Program Transcript

[MUSIC PLAYING]

LOUISE FITZPATRICK: The world in which we live requires that all of us address global issues, whether they be the economy or the political scene, regardless of what it is. But health care is also a major factor in addressing the issues of the world. There are still parts of the world where people go to bed hungry every night. There are parts of the world where communicable diseases like malaria, which we know can be eradicated, run rampant. The AIDS epidemic continues.

And it is not just the nurses who are indigenous to those parts of the world that are so affected that need to address these issues. We all do. The world has really shrunk in many ways. And so in addition to being concerned about our own local environment, we need to think beyond that. Health and disease are global. And the mobility of the population only increases that movement of people back and forth. And they bring with them the same problems and issues that they are experiencing in their own local areas.

There are numerous opportunities for people to provide assistance. Just wanting to do good isn't enough. There has to be ability. There has to be knowledge of culture. There has to be understanding of superstitions, of religion, and how they affect people's health care and their ability to accept advice and also service. But the possibilities are enormous.

CAROL HOLTZ: When you think of health and health issues, health care, you cross borders. You think of the whole world. And global health entails cooperation among nations, because illness and health care really is not limited, in many situations, to borders. It has no respect of borders. Nurses today are affected by the health and health-care issues of places all over the world.

For example, what went on in La Gloria, Mexico-- it started supposedly the epidemic of H1N1-- affects what happens right in my own community. What happened in Chernobyl in the late '80s affected health care and health issues all over the world. How people are raising crops and sending them-- fruits and vegetables, for instance-- from one area to another affects the health of my local community. So one cannot look at an isolationist perspective. It's imperative that people look at a more global perspective.

HUDA ABU-SAAD HUIJER: I've been to Pakistan, to India, to Africa. So my view of global health is not really based only on what I have read in books or have heard from others' talk about it. I've seen it actually in action. And it was wonderful to be able to compare. When we moved to Beirut six years ago from Holland, the issues that we faced in Holland, we're facing exactly the same issues in Beirut.

The magnitude of the issue is different. So basically, issues regarding maternal child health are exactly the same everywhere. Emphasis on good prenatal care, support of the mother, support of the family, and the whole process are exactly the same. You know, the emphasis that the countries put on these issues is very different.

Chronic illness is the same everywhere. We have major problems with chronic illness-- the graying of the population, the elderly, and with the morbidity of the problems, the problems that they were facing. And we face exactly the same things in Lebanon. Where does nursing fit into all of this, and what can we do to improve on all of that?

I admire the Dutch system quite a bit, because the emphasis is not on hospital care. When I talk about health from a global perspective and the role of nurses in it, I don't think of the hospital, in all honesty. I think of the community, and I think of the primary health care settings, and I think of the home.

And in Holland, I witnessed that, actually, in action. Home health care is a major thing. The role of the nurses and what they can do in the home setting in their communities is magnificent. And so this is a role that I have always thought-- for nursing, no matter what we do, I mean, we have to be skilled to do this type of work in the hospital with the acuity and all of this.

But the most important role, in my view, is to be able to provide these services in the home setting. So this is something that we are grappling with now. I mean, all the issues that I have mentioned-- the care of the youth. The drug abuse, of course, is another issue. And it's also all over the world. But I think with us, it's also a very prominent issue. How do we educate the youth about the drug use and abuse and all these things that are related to their health?

And here, I think the most important thing for nursing, I believe, is to go back to the community and be able to work more on health-promotion issues, trying to talk to people about how to change their lifestyles in order to decrease the possibilities of illness, and trying to address the issues of normal growth and development. And how can you help bring up a normal, healthy baby, a child, to become a responsible, healthy adult? So it is not only patient education. It is educating the public in general in their own home communities.

LOUISE FITZPATRICK: People do need the technical and the scientific background. If you're going to eradicate malaria, then you need to know how to do it. The drug companies, although they sometimes get a bad reputation, are doing some enormously wonderful things in parts of the world.

But nurses need to make it happen. There needs to be a connection between the corporations or the governments or the NGOs that want these things to happen, or a philanthropist who will help make it happen, and the person who is at the

front lines and will assist either the indigenous caretakers. Or who then, they themselves, will be able to provide care to people and teach them and help them to help themselves.

And that is always our goal in public-health nursing. It is certainly to do for people, but to help people do for themselves and to provide the resources they need. And there's got to be the human connection there. And I think the nurses today have a great opportunity to be that connector--

-It's OK. I promise.

LOUISE FITZPATRICK: --nurses who are well educated, are well prepared to provide those kinds of services to the people that need it, whether it's here at home or whether it's abroad. But more and more, we see that the world is also our local community.

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