

International Interprofessional Learning: Creating the conditions for advancing neuroscience nursing practice

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The 2019 EANN Quadrennial Congress, hosted by BANN and the SBNS, gave rise to a civic and professional collaboration that pioneered interprofessional learning within neurosciences. This collaborative process was borne out of years of dedicated work by all organisations that reflects a synergistic and mutual investment in authentic outward and inward mobility to promote knowledge and understanding and broaden horizons of participants from different nationalities and cultures. This facilitated expertise to blend with that of the other, providing the opportunity for improved practices, learning and interprofessional working. Education is the premise of progress, and as Florence Nightingale famously said (Nightingale, 1872):

For us who nurse, our nursing is a thing, which, unless we are making progress in it, every year, every month, every week, take my word for it, we are going back

In this regard, we recognise that as professional nurses, we cannot stagnate; society depends on us to continually grow in our practice so that society is as healthy as it can be. It is through learning that we advance our practice, understand more fully the needs of the people in our care, and create the conditions for the best outcomes.

Both EANN and BANN are conscious that, globally, many neuroscience nurses have little or no access to education and development, including inductions, and study days. In this regard, the opportunity for education for neuroscience nurses is not accessible to all, many of whom would view it as a gift and an investment in them and the people in their care. All three organisations involved in this international Congress are committed to education, innovation and supporting members. However, it is the members and wider neuroscience community that provide the richness in knowledge, skills and expertise that is shared at Congress and they therefore create the opportunities for shared learning. The organisations are the architects of such interprofessional learning, but delivery is grounded in the dissemination of best practice and the opportunities to learn from and with each other. Congress provided the opportunity for delegates to immerse themselves in the opportunities presented and ultimately represented the individual and collective dedication to neuroscience nursing, self-development and most importantly, to the recipients of care. Topics covered during the three-day event transversed neuro-oncology, neuro-rehabilitation neurosurgery and neuromedicine along with the advancements in advanced practitioners working in neurosciences. With over 500 neuroscience practitioners from countries around the globe attending Congress at the iconic Manchester Central Venue (including from the USA, Australia, Europe and China), global engagement was successful and authentic.

This commitment to learning and developing practice is central in moving towards the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (2018) vision of the Future Nurse. Models of care are continually changing to ones increasingly delivered by multi-professional teams. Interprofessional learning and collaboration are therefore a cornerstone of effective practice and, for neuroscience nurses, learning events such as Congress represent a medium and catalyst for this dynamic to occur. Indeed, the Person-Centred Practice Framework by Professors Brendan McCormack and Tanya McCance (2017) identifies that we need to develop the workforce, be strategic in our leadership and have shared decision-making systems, all of which have interprofessional learning and working at their core. Learning from and with others represents an opportunity to invest in not only ourselves, but the people in our care. They are the people, families and communities who depend on us to help them deal with what can often be the most challenging times in their lives. Advancing what we do and how we do it, results in a better care experience and this is central to the civic nature of our professions.

References

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