

Internationally Educated Nurses: Are Nursing Leaders Ready?

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Abstract

Internationally educated nurses (IENs) who emigrate to Canada to realize their dreams are often faced with many barriers. With Canada's aging nursing workforce, the recruitment and maintenance of internationally educated nurses will become an important health human resource and policy issue. Although validation of IEN's credentials by the College of Nurses of Ontario ensure patient safety, the transition of IENs into Canada's everyday nursing practice presents other challenges for organizations. This article focuses on an unrecognized kind of discrimination in the workplace as reported by IENs in Ontario hospitals. When internationally educated nurses are treated differently from the host country nurses in terms of their choices of job selections during the hiring process; treated differently with regards to job promotions or work assignments, then these nurses are experiencing a subtle form of discrimination. This type of discrimination is called labour market segmentation (LMS) and can be 'subtly acted out' within the walls of organizations and institutions. The impact of this kind of discrimination is crucial to the integration and retention of foreign trained nurses. This paper will endeavor to increase awareness among employers and policy makers about labour market segmentation as one of the yet unrecognized experiences of internationally educated nurses in Canada.

Key words: internationally, educated, experiences, nurses, workplace, labour- market, segmentation.

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