

2020 the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife

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The World Health Organisation ([WHO](#)), along with key partners such as International Confederation of Midwives ([ICM](#)), International Council of Nurses ([ICN](#)), Nursing Now and the United Nations Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)) has designated 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. It is an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the valuable contributions of the professions. An opportunity to share best practice, inspire and empower colleagues and influence future practice.

So what is special about 2020? Florence Nightingale was born in 1820 and 2020 marks the bicentenary year of her birth. She was a systemic thinker, a passionate statistician and social reformist who is widely considered the founder of modern nursing. 2020 is the year to celebrate Florence Nightingale's legacy, put nurses and midwives at the heart of health policy and contribute to the World Health Organisation's work in the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife.

According to WHO, of the 43.5 million health workers in the world, it is estimated that 20.7 million are nurses and midwives. They are the largest number of the NHS workforce, highly skilled, multi-faceted professionals who represent diverse communities. Their contributions are critical not only to day-to-day care, but also in expanding the type of health care available in the future.

Nurses and midwives play a pivotal role in an extensive array of health and care research. They are unique professionals at the forefront of care and play a critical role in health promotion, disease prevention and care delivery, all of which is underpinned by evidence-based practice and the latest research.

The International Year of the Nurse and Midwife campaign aims to:

- Celebrate the professions contributions to improve global health
- Acknowledge the challenging conditions professionals face
- Advocate for increased investment in the professional workforce.

It is about raising the profile and status of nursing and midwifery which in turn improves global health and strengthens the professions. Nursing and midwifery have come a long way in 200 years since Florence Nightingale's birth and are dedicated to evolving further in the coming decades. Clinical research nursing and midwifery are expanding specialties in their own right. The roles are challenging, complex, dynamic and innovative, involving a blend of clinical, interpersonal and academic skills. 2020 is a unique time for advancing such roles and to inspire future generations of nurses and midwives to become research active practitioners, advocates and leaders.