



Editorial

Virtual Health Library - Nursing: new perspectives

The proposal for the creation and development of the Virtual Health Library (VHL), [under the leadership of the Latin American and Caribbean Center for Information in Health Sciences (BIREME) and supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the Brazilian Ministry of Health (MH)], is an expansion in the model of technical cooperation. The VHL promotes the decentralized production and operation of multimedia information sources (connected in a network, with direct and universal access, without geographical and time limitations), to respond in an organized and efficient manner to the emerging needs of developing countries to produce and operate health information sources integrated into the internet.

The VHL-Nursing (which was created in this context in 2005, as a thematic initiative), inaugurates a new paradigm in the nursing area to promote equity in the access to health information, as well as to establish national and regional partnerships and consortia. Its goal is to maximize the use of information technology and collections of information sources, based on cooperative work (for exchange of experiences) and in the development and decentralized operation at all levels of nursing information.

The general objectives of the VHL-Nursing include promoting a greater access to the nursing information through a universal, equitable, modern, and efficient access; building a space for analysis, exchange, dissemination and promotion of knowledge about nursing, and building an easily accessible information patrimony in the nursing area. In addition, the VHL-Nursing stimulates knowledge generation processes, helps to improve education and practice for nurses to act with ethical and social commitment in the education, research, and health care areas.

Several subprojects have been developed in cooperation with the main Brazilian institutions of nursing education with view to the dissemination and systematization of knowledge in Nursing. The Nursing Database (BDENF) and the Bibliographic Control of Scientific and Technical Literature in Nursing, the Journals Portal [SciELO Methodology (REV@ENF)], Nursing Terminology (an enlargement of Descriptors in Nursing and Thematic Areas) are highlights. In addition to these subprojects, new ones are being considered: Second Formative Opinion in Primary Health Care and Evidence-Based Nursing.

We can highlight the creation of a virtuous circle in the field of scientific communication as an important result, especially the expansion of nursing journals in the BDENF (31 Brazilian and international journals); important visibility of journals that integrate the REV@ENF; establishment of new thematic areas in nursing from the definition of new primary and transversal

scopes and descriptors; adoption of a new methodology for identification and description of new terms that will contribute to the process of scientific information recovery; creation of a Bank of Theses and Dissertations; organization of an Event Directory, and expansion of the VHL-Nursing initiative to other countries in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, and Uruguay), and yet the recent creation of the international VHL Nursing.

Among the challenges for the future, we can highlight the following: dissemination of innovative experiences in the production of research and processes on scientific communication in health and nursing; definition of information sources and flows of the technical-scientific literature on nursing in the Latin America and the Caribbean, Portugal, Spain, and Portuguese-speaking countries, as well as the construction of the responsibility matrix of the International VHL-Nursing; establishment of the BDENF Nursing Database and the Scientific and Technical Literature of Latin America and the Caribbean (LILACS) as a platform for convergence of the main information sources currently identified (indexing of journals, theses, and dissertations, clinical manuals and protocols, annals of international scientific events, and official reports and documents of nursing interest); increase in the number of countries in the Region of the Americas participating in International VHL-Nursing. This is very important to leverage the strategy for a great international articulation and strengthen the REV@ENF Portal from the expansion of journals that integrate the Portal, as well as to broaden the visibility processes in the Brazilian and international scene.

Finally, encouraging the development of networking of the Brazilian and international institutions that cooperate in the systematization and diffusion processes of the technical-scientific knowledge in nursing is highlighted as our main challenge. Its starting point is the definition of strategies to build Brazilian networks of the VHL-Nursing, including PAHO, Graduate Programs, Editors, Associations and governmental agencies, and the MH.

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