Seminar on Health and Migration, 9-11 June 2004

Session IIB: Migration and Health Policies

Global overview of migration of health care workers,

Dr Orvill ADAMS

Outline

- The health workforce in the global context
- Relevance of the migration of health workers
- Policy issues in migration of health workers
- Evidence and policy options to "manage migration"

Migration of health care workers: global overview

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Seminar on Health and Migration
International Organization of Migration
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The health workforce in the global context

- Overall migration flows are increasing and likely to continue in the future
- Trade agreements are removing barriers to labour flows between countries
- Gap between standards of education narrowing
- There is a global labour market for certain categories of health workers

Trend in migration of professionals to the US

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service 2001; Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services
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Trend in migration of physicians and nurses to the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Physicians</th>
<th>Nurses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>16000</td>
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</tbody>
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Relevance of the migration of health workers

- Developed countries are relying on migrant health workers to cope with domestic shortages
- Developing countries are experiencing low labour supply and public sector expenditure reduction
- Rising death toll among health workers due to HIV/AIDS
- Low motivation and decrease in productivity
- Early decision to migrate in weak economies

Evidence for policy options on migration

- Demographics of migrants
- Factors influencing migration
  - Push - pull
  - Reference group – behaviour model
- Patterns of movement of migrants
- Costs and benefits
- Data and information
- Link between reduction in the stock of health workers and health services performance

Policy issues on migration of health workers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>National</th>
<th>International</th>
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| Capacity to deliver health services
| Global labour market (reduction of barriers to move) |
| Internal migration (public/private, rural/urban) investment – gain or loss
| Methods of recruitment and commitments |
| Replacement and opportunity cost
| Involves different sectors (education, labour, foreign affairs, etc.) |
| Remittances – not sector specific
| Regulatory framework – information sharing - quality |
Emerging policy options to "manage migration"

- Mechanisms that encourage temporary stays
- Develop explicit policies to reduce immigration from at-risk countries
  - e.g., Commonwealth Agreement on Ethical Recruitment
- Facilitate return migration, harness the diaspora
- Use bilateral agreements to manage migration
- Train new types of providers that meet local needs
- Improving planning in developed and developing countries