



## Supporting sustainable development goals in the nursing education system: Nursing student practitioner, Faculty of Nursing, Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University Thailand

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### Abstract

Nursing education in Thailand is targeted on “stability, prosperity, and sustainability”. In the Faculty of Nursing at Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University, the focus is on sustainability in nursing education. A “student practitioner” approach is a vital part of the program. The 3 key concepts of this approach include professional knowledge, practicing skills, and social skills. In order to be successful in this approach, the concept of Sufficient Economic Philosophy, which was introduced by His Majesty King Bhumibol as a means of guiding his people to live sustainably, has been integrated and deployed along with these 7 elements: 1) curriculum development which focuses on integrated nursing practice, nursing care in diverse culture settings, nursing innovation, digital technology in healthcare, and ethics in the nursing profession; 2) faculty members and staff development involve fostering and enhancing both knowledge and expertise for the staff; 3) strengthening the learning process which consists of a coaching system for lecturers responsible for the program, defining student competencies, planning supplementary curriculum for practice and social skills, and designing an evaluation system for student competencies; 4) enhancing learning support by promoting the community to be a part of clinical practice and facilitating self-learning technology; 5) new administration and management systems for establishing partnership with clinical partners and collaboration in curriculum design to build and expand student practitioner skills; 6) clinical partner and network collaboration, which follows the concept of “the center for excellence in nursing,” in order to explore the knowledge and practice for health care professionals and to develop broader knowledge through the learning center; and 7) developing a qualifications framework which involves defining professional knowledge competencies, practice standards for nursing skills, and social skills with a service mind.

The student practitioner approach at the Faculty of Nursing, Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University would build sustainability in nursing education and create stability in the local community in accordance with the university’s determination statement “Prepare the King’s Nurse”.

**Keywords:** Sustainable development goals, nursing student practitioner, nursing education, Thailand

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### 1. Introduction

The nursing education system in Thailand could be divided into 3 periods; The first period was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in which the idea of creating science curricula was emphasized. Later on, it moved to a problem-solving teaching method. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea was shifted to a health system and its reform. The focus was on the curricula that genuinely built student performance. Then the education system reform for healthcare personnel in the era of science and technology, the new business model, and the most important one: “the changing needs of the public and society for health services” was introduced.

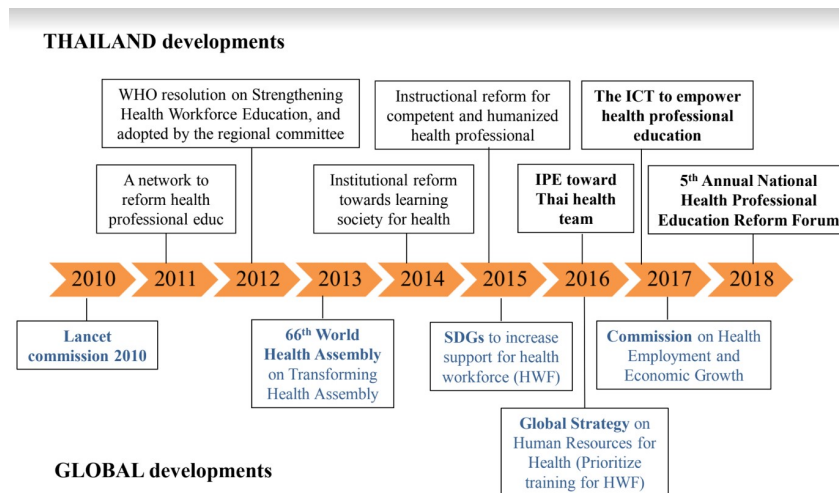
### 2. Philosophy Underpinning the Faculty of Nursing: Education in SDGs

Rajabhat Universities are known for their commitment in serving the local community. Therefore, the Faculty of Nursing under Nakhon Pathom University is the academic institute where nursing student practitioners are developed to serve the local community. The Faculty of Nursing has carried out this commitment under the philosophy of “learning support, empowerment, and creative changes”. The expected characteristics and identities of nursing students such as “professional nurses with excellent quality nursing services that meet international standards” and “service mind and willing to learn” are created through the academic and learning process. The Faculty of Nursing emphasizes producing professional nurses along with moral and ethical values, supporting and con-

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**Figure 1:** The development of an education system reform for healthcare personnel in the era of science and technology.

ducting nursing research, providing academic service, creating nursing innovation with clinical partners and networks, strengthening staff and students' capabilities to meet standards and professional ethics, preserving cultural and local wisdoms to maintain the local identity, and developing efficiency administration systems.

### 3. Components SDGs Achievement in Nursing Practitioner Education

The achievement of the nursing student practitioner consists of 7 components:

#### Component 1: Curriculum Development

The Bachelor of Nursing Science Program curriculum, Faculty of Nursing, Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University (NPRU) has been developed based on the concept of responding to needs, solving problems of local communities and developing target groups affected by changes in local communities. The NPRU nursing curriculum has been developed by critiquing two main factors which influence the future work of nursing graduates including: 1. Economic situation and development and 2. Social and cultural situations or development. In accordance with the 20-year Thailand National Strategic Plan, the Thai government emphasizes stability, prosperity, and sustainability with the development of the country, based on the sufficient economy philosophy, leading to the development of the happiness of Thai people and in response to the achievement of national interests in the development of a sustainable quality of life (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2017). In addition, the development of the new NPRU nursing curriculum is analyzed according to the 20-Year National Strategic Plan for Public Health (2016 – 2036), focusing on being the main organization of health that unites society for good health development and governing the health system in a participatory and

sustainable manner. With the goal of making people healthy, the Happy Staff Sustainable health system strategy of excellence was established in four areas: 1) Health promotion 2) Excellent disease prevention and consumer protection 3) Excellent service 4) Personnel excellence and management of excellence with good governance. Balance (Ministry of Public Health, 2016), especially in the service of excellence, focusing on long term care of public health in the local community, emergency medical service system, and a plan to develop excellent services which affect the content in the curriculum that needs to be accelerated to be in line with the changing direction of public health policy. Therefore, the curriculum has a teaching approach that integrates the principles of the king's science (Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, SEP) with the mission of higher education by using a new management system to support integrated learning with research missions and academic services that respond to sustainable public health problems and respond to the sustainable development policy of Thailand.

#### Component 2: Faculty members and staff development

The faculty has 5 lecturers responsible for the program – one with academic position and one in the process. In the meantime, the faculty also prepares and develops another four lecturers who will be responsible for the program in the future.

The faculty members and staff are fostered and encouraged to gain nursing knowledge, conduct research, and provide academic services. All academic staff are obliged to attend a conference at least 15 hours per year. For supporting staff, they are obliged to study English with Filipino lecturers 2 hours per week.

#### Component 3: Strengthening the learning process

1. Creating a curriculum management process by adjusting the verification method:



**Table 1.** Skill development in curriculum management.

Class	Detailed curriculum management
<b>First-Year Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer services at the community healthcare center to gain broader knowledge, have a service-oriented mindset, positive attitude towards the profession;</li> <li>• TOEIC classes to develop English skills;</li> <li>• Field trip/study visits;</li> <li>• Selection of students for exchange program in Taiwan and Vietnam.</li> </ul>
<b>Second-Year Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize on critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills using the case study teaching method;</li> <li>• Develop technological skills in healthcare;</li> <li>• TOEIC classes to develop English skills;</li> <li>• Activities for student practitioners in Taiwan (to develop nursing intervention skills with international quality and standards);</li> <li>• Study visits (focus on adult and gerontological nursing).</li> </ul>
<b>Third-Year Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize on conducting research and nursing innovation for national and international conferences;</li> <li>• TOEIC classes to develop English skills;</li> <li>• Integrated academic services with practicum courses.</li> </ul>
<b>Fourth-Year Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize on supplementary activities to develop systematic and analytical thinking, teamwork, communication skills, consultation skills;</li> <li>• TOEIC classes to develop English skills;</li> <li>• Integrated academic services with practicum courses.</li> </ul>

1.1 Appointing course management committee and verification committee from different subject groups;

1.2 Setting lecturers' criteria such as; nursing research course requires lecturers with doctoral degree, funded research papers, published papers, or lecturers responsible for the program.

1.3 Setting criteria and conditions for course management by working collaboratively with lecturers;

1.4 Defining and adjusting subjects and content to modernize activities and assignments according to students sequenced and developmental stages;

1.5 Adjusting the verification method by using observation techniques and in-depth interviews with students.

2. Supplementary curriculum for students based on community as a practical setting.

3. Create a measurement and evaluation process by using a 360-degree evaluation. Integrate the concept of the Community Development Indicators System related to the King's Science and Sustainable Development to evaluate the learning outcome of students and the outcome of academic service which affect our partnership community.

3.1 For theoretical courses, student's reflection is used to evaluate lecturers by the evaluation committee consisting of the Dean, Vice Dean for Academics, Head of Nursing department, subject administrator and lecturer. An evaluation form (Google) is designed to survey students, lecturers and administrators.

3.2 For practice courses like the Structure Clinical Evaluation (OSCE), pretest and posttest are used. Focus groups were reflected from student and preceptor and a non-teaching lecturer who is a practicum

evaluator.

3.3 For capability assessment, electronic or on-line examination is designed. The main components of capability assessment include knowledge skills, professional skills and social skills. The knowledge skill consists of 8 items for essential knowledge to obtain a license to be professional nurse. It was noted that 80 percent of the nursing students who took the on-line examination passed the test. However, it was also noted that the students needed more time to finish the online test. The results of the capacity assessment for nursing students were shown as table below.

#### **Component 4: Enhancing learning support**

Classrooms, laboratories, appliances, technologies, and environment are managed and organized to create a learning atmosphere for student practitioners. Students gain practical experience in simulation laboratories on campus and in communities.

#### **Component 5: New administration systems and management**

The key success of coaching management was supported by:

1. The five key main nursing subjects (Pediatric nursing, Community nursing, Psychiatric nursing, Adult and gerontology nursing, and Maternal and child nursing) need more encouragement for co-workers to work as team and to conduct frequent productivity meetings.

2. The technology reform management system used the Google form platform to evaluate curriculum, to survey the needs of the user, and to establish linkage and develop an online data system.

3. Meeting with students to explain curriculum management and promote open mindedness and reflective inputs.

4. Discussion and open communication with lectur-



**Table 2.** Capacity assessment for nursing students.

Class	Detailed Capacity
<b>First-Year Students</b>	Ability to evaluate health assessment, teach basic hand hygiene, advise on health nutrition, use mobile application to administrate drug.
<b>Second-Year Students</b>	Ability to perform basic nursing intervention, nursing process, sterile techniques, fall precaution, and health innovation using nursing digital technologies.
<b>Third-Year Students</b>	Ability to perform complicated nursing intervention, risk management on high alert, drug and method of administration, health innovation using nursing digital technologies in community setting, and academic service in hospital.
<b>Fourth-Year Students</b>	Ability to perform nursing intervention according to the 8 criteria of registered nurse competencies, nursing intervention according to the hospital quality standard, applied digital technologies for nursing administration in hospital and community.

ers about workload, course learning management and meeting with the team teacher.

5. MOU with foreign countries for the practicum exchange program to be of high academic quality.

#### **Component 6: Clinical partners and networks**

The Faculty of Nursing collaborates with two hospitals – Ratchaburi Hospital and Nakhon Pathom Hospital – as partners for “center of excellence in nursing” to improve the quality of teaching and the learning process by using the lessons learned from the hospitals. The faculty has established partnership agreements with several universities overseas. Several collaborative activities have resulted in joint education networks, faculty and student exchange programs, collaborative international nursing conferences, as well as other types of academic cooperation.

#### **Component 7: Developing a qualifications framework**

The capacity characteristics of the nursing practicum are:

1. Knowledge skills as essential nursing knowledge
2. Positive attitude towards the profession
3. Acute, crisis and emergency nursing practicum as a professional skill in every layer of the healthcare system
4. Ethical and moral values of the Professional Nurse
5. Systematic thinking, teamwork, communication ability and effective health consultation

The results found were as follows:

First year: They have basic professional skills such as nursing standards, health assessment, patient center care service which underpins patient safety, and hand washing to protect from infection. The nursing practicum student could choose the appropriate digital health technology with food and health promotion.

Second year: They have more standard nursing practicum ability, always used nursing process in practicum for patient safety, careful in sterile technique and bed fall prevention. They have a high nursing practicum skill and critical thinking skill with health digital technology, health innovation and nursing care.

Third year: They have more standard nursing practicum skills with nursing process, caring with crit-

ical nursing practicum, plan risk management in nursing care, drug risk administration, critical thinking with health digital technology, health innovation and nursing care for academic service in the community and hospital.

Fourth year: They have high performance as a professional nurse with patient safety and 8 capacity for professional nurse license, critical thinking with health digital technology, health innovation and nursing care as team head in ward administration and in the community.

## **4. Conclusion**

According to the synthesis of the situations mentioned above, it is pointed out the need for analysis of activities, service or operations that may affect the achievement of SDGs determined by the indicators as goals of the faculty. The important factor to support faculty movement is the mechanism of monitoring the performance of the community and health care service units. Like other agencies or other organizations involved in implementing SDGs, the systematic design that defines the indicators at the area level and organization is crucial. Moreover, the determination of the information and the database to be used to monitor the implementation for SDGs achievement can indicate the potential of the area or the organizations including the nursing practicum. It reflects the requirement of other countries in re-examining and redesigning the work systems of the organizations at all levels, from the local to the national level.

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