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Review: A new system for nursing specialisation: the thoughts and opinions of nurses.

Jacqueline Filkins (2017) *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 22 (5). pp. 370-371.

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The reviewed study reaches out to nurses in clinical practice to seek their views on an important development for the profession: the introduction of nursing specialisation in a country where it is not yet established. The nurses responding to the researchers' questions demonstrate that they recognise the value of nurse specialists and their potential to impact not only on the profession but also on the quality of care.

The invitation for nurses to voice their opinions and suggestions on developing nurse specialists has demonstrated a willingness of academic staff to listen and be open to suggestions. I view this as a potential significant step towards linking academic and clinical staff towards realising their goal.

The added value of this research is that it will have created a space for clinical staff to reflect on what could be achieved together and, hopefully, to be better informed on the work of nurse specialists and nurses working in advanced practice. The flip side is that it has also revealed the chasm between the present situation and standing of the profession in that country and the developments that are still required for achieving the introduction of recognised nursing specialisations. There is no evidence of nurses' understanding that autonomous practice should start at the level of entry into the nursing profession and then lead to advanced decision-making and practice through higher education and experience.

I would have liked to identify the reason for the statement made by the author that 'specialisation in nursing cannot yet be adopted in Europe'. It is true that there is no standalone prescriptive educational programme that fits all countries, nor is there a Europe-wide recognition of registration as a specialist nurse practitioner. But the characteristics of specialist nurses and advanced practitioners' educational levels are well documented. They form the platform for other countries to model their development accordingly and to benefit from knowledge and experience of others in that field.

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire has shown that nurses see the need for their profession to be protected by associations and institutions. The respondents are, however, silent on how nurses could strengthen the voice of these bodies through their own engagement.

Despite evident language problems, this does not detract unduly from the message it conveys: nurses want to embrace nurse specialisation, but the steps required to achieving this are not yet fully recognised by them. Conversely, academic staff in the authors' country demonstrate that they have the knowledge relating to the development of the roles and functions of nurse specialists, and that together changes can begin to be made.

The paper will resonate in other countries that may have similar situations to face. In countries where nurse specialists are now part of the culture, it provides deeper insight and understanding of another nation's nursing profession.