

REVIEW ARTICLE

Implementing Task Substitution for Doctors and Nurses as a Key Element of Healthcare Reform

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Abstract

The ongoing global shortage of healthcare professionals, particularly doctors and nurses, presents a critical challenge to the efficiency and accessibility of healthcare systems. This manuscript reviews the concept of task substitution between doctors and nurses, emphasizing the role of Advanced Nursing Practitioners (ANPs) in addressing workforce deficits. Drawing on examples from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, the study explores how ANPs have been integrated into various healthcare settings, including primary care, geriatrics, mental health, and emergency care. The manuscript also discusses the potential for implementing similar practices in Poland, offering a strategic framework for enhancing nursing education, expanding ANP roles, and improving patient outcomes through healthcare reform. By examining the educational requirements, scope of practice, and existing models of ANP integration, this article provides a comprehensive analysis of how advanced nursing roles can alleviate pressures on healthcare systems and suggests actionable steps for policymakers.

Keywords: Advanced nursing practice, Healthcare workforce shortages, Task substitution, Nursing education, Healthcare reform.

1. Introduction

This publication stems from a concern for the state of healthcare in our country. According to most citizens, the organization of healthcare is not optimal. This raises the question of whether this situation occurs in other countries, especially in Europe and other Western countries. We decided to investigate this and present it in one of the introductory chapters of this article. It turns out that the inefficiency of healthcare services is indeed felt in many countries, mainly due to shortages of medical staff. In the subsequent parts of our article, we ponder whether these shortages primarily concern doctors or nurses. These considerations lead to the hypothesis that if task substitution between doctors and nurses were implemented in certain areas of medicine, the overall efficiency of the system would improve. To explore the feasibility of

such substitution, we decided to compare the education and training of doctors and nurses, with particular emphasis on the potential for nurses to independently manage patients in primary care settings.

The analysis of the education received by doctors and nurses in several selected countries suggests the usefulness of distinguishing a professional group of nurses known as "Advanced Nursing Practitioners" (ANPs). We believe that ANP nurses can successfully perform the same functions as doctors in certain areas, tasks, and procedures. However, it is also essential to seek out literature data to see if attempts have been made to implement such task substitution. One of us can present our own experiences from implementing such an attempt to improve healthcare services in a specific region of our country.

Since we believe that the substitution of doctors' and nurses' tasks can occur at various levels of the healthcare system, it is necessary to review the possibilities of implementing 'advanced nursing practice' to improve different levels of healthcare services.

If we consider a broader implementation of the discussed task substitution between doctors and nurses as an essential element of healthcare reform, we need to contemplate the subsequent necessary steps to realize this intention. Universities educating nurses and healthcare facilities conducting pilot implementations of the discussed task substitution can play a significant role in this process.

2. Healthcare Workforce Shortages in Europe, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand

In several countries in Europe, as well as in the USA, Australia, and New Zealand, there is indeed a shortage of doctors and nurses. Here is an overview of the situation in these regions:

Europe: According to a WHO report from 2022, Europe is struggling with a significant shortage of healthcare workers. It is estimated that this shortage could reach nearly 1.8 million healthcare workers, with some countries having only 2.4 doctors per 1,000 people. In 16 out of 31 surveyed countries, a lack of medical specialists was identified, and in 15 countries, there is a shortage of nurses, medical caregivers, and general family doctors. In about half of the surveyed countries, these shortages are considered severe ^[1].

Australia: This country competes on the global stage to attract experienced doctors and nurses, aiming to mitigate staffing shortages and prepare for potential waves of COVID-19. Australia is one of the most reliant on foreign healthcare workers among OECD countries. More than half of the doctors and over one-third of the nurses in Australia were born abroad ^[2].

New Zealand: This country has one of the highest proportions of foreign-born healthcare workers, with 42% of doctors and nearly 30% of nurses born abroad. Like Australia, New Zealand heavily depends on foreign-born healthcare workers, who play a crucial role in filling staffing gaps in regional and remote hospitals and long-term care facilities ^[3].

USA: Projections indicate significant shortages of both doctors and nurses in the United States. By 2030, a deficit of

219,677 doctors (21.6% of demand) and 1,807,261 nurses (42.2% of demand) is anticipated. These figures highlight the scale of the problem that the American healthcare system may face [4].

These data indicate that the issue of medical staff shortages is significant and affects many regions worldwide, underscoring the need for global strategies to improve the situation in healthcare.

3. Comparison of the Education of Doctors and Nurses, with a Particular Focus on the Possibility of Nurses Independently Managing Patients in Primary Care Facilities

To explore the potential for task substitution between doctors and nurses, it is important to compare their education and training, focusing on the possibility of nurses independently managing patients in primary care facilities.

Educational Paths:

Doctors: They require a long and intensive educational path, typically including several years of medical school and residency. Medical education focuses on a thorough understanding of human physiology, pathology, pharmacology, and a wide range of practical clinical skills [5].

ANPs: Nurses aiming to become Advanced Nursing Practitioners (ANPs) usually need a bachelor's degree in nursing, several years of professional experience, and then complete postgraduate studies (often at the master's level). These programs focus on advanced nursing practice, diagnostics, case management, and therapeutic skills [6].

Specialization and Scope of Practice:

Doctors: They specialize in specific fields of medicine, such as surgery, internal medicine, or pediatrics. Their scope of practice includes diagnostics, treatment, performing surgical procedures, and managing complex medical cases [7].

ANPs: They specialize in specific areas, such as geriatric care, pediatrics, or family care. Their scope of practice often includes conducting examinations, managing chronic diseases, patient education, and in some jurisdictions, prescribing medications [8].

Competencies and Responsibilities:

Doctors: They are responsible for diagnosing and treating diseases, conducting clinical research, interpreting test results, and deciding on treatment plans. Their role often requires deep specialist knowledge and the ability to make decisions in complex and rapidly changing situations [9].

ANPs: They focus on holistic care, which includes both the physical and psychological aspects of patient health. They are responsible for monitoring health status, patient education, and managing care plans, often in close collaboration with doctors [10].

Summary:

The differences in education between doctors and ANPs are significant and reflect different approaches to healthcare. Doctors undergo a more intensive and specialized educational path, focusing on a broad range of medical clinical skills and specialist knowledge. In contrast, ANPs, although also well-educated, place greater emphasis on holistic care and case management, which is crucial in today's healthcare. Collaboration between these two professional groups is essential for providing high-quality healthcare.

Specificity of Nurse Education:

Among all medical professions, nurses have the most intense contact with patients. Compared to doctors, they can devote more time to patients. The nature of their profession means that interactions with patients are not only verbal but also involve physical care.

The education of contemporary nurses, who have graduated from schools adhering to EU standards, where the curriculum includes approximately 4,800 hours, is extensive and comprehensive. In the bachelor's program, this curriculum includes the subject of Psychology for 60 hours and "Psychiatry and Psychiatric Nursing" for 195 hours. Additionally, subjects such as "Sociology" (30 hours), Pedagogy (45 hours), Palliative Care (125 hours), Health Promotion (65 hours), and Philosophy and Ethics of the Profession (90 hours) are taught. These topics receive significantly more attention in nursing studies than in medical studies. In the master's program, there are subjects like Fundamentals of Psychotherapy (30 hours), Psychiatry with consideration of issues related to the elderly (20 hours), and Psychosocial Aspects of Old Age (20 hours) ^[11].

Nurses who have already started working after their studies perform various functions related to contact with patients reporting existential and psychological problems. Nurses perform very different functions formally distinguished in the structure of healthcare facilities. Some of them, such as primary care nurses, especially community nurses, employees of various care and treatment facilities, psychiatric treatment facilities, midwives, and nurses employed in sanatoriums, face challenges such as patient complaints about their living conditions, family situations, and mental health.

4. Expanded Roles of Nurses in Some Western Countries: The Concept of "Advanced Practice Nursing"

Expanded roles for nurses are a significant element of healthcare systems in many countries. Below, we discuss several examples of these roles, focusing primarily on the role of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) in the USA and comparing it with other countries:

USA: Nurse Practitioner (NP)

- **Education and Certification:** NPs are advanced practice nurses who have obtained a master's or doctoral degree in nursing. They must also pass a national certification process in their specialty.
- **Scope of Responsibilities:** NPs can perform physical examinations, diagnose and treat illnesses, prescribe

medications, and provide patient health education. In some states, NPs have full practice autonomy, meaning they can work without physician supervision.

- **Specializations:** NPs can specialize in various fields, such as pediatrics, geriatrics, mental health, or family care^[12].

Canada: Nurse Practitioner (NP)

- **Education and Certification:** Similar to the USA, Canadian NPs must complete an advanced degree program and obtain the appropriate licensure.
- **Scope of Responsibilities:** In Canada, NPs can also diagnose illnesses, prescribe medications, and manage patient cases. Their role is particularly important in rural and remote areas^[13].

United Kingdom: Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)

- **Education and Certification:** ANPs in the UK are also highly qualified, often holding a master's degree in nursing.
- **Scope of Responsibilities:** ANPs can conduct clinical assessments, diagnose, treat, and prescribe medications. In the UK, their role often includes working in primary care teams as well as in specialized units^[14].

Australia: Nurse Practitioner (NP)

- **Education and Certification:** Australian NPs must complete an advanced degree program and obtain the appropriate accreditation.
- **Scope of Responsibilities:** Similar to their counterparts in other countries, Australian NPs can diagnose illnesses, prescribe medications, and provide comprehensive patient care^[15].

Practice Autonomy in Different Countries: Depending on the country, NPs can have varying levels of autonomy. For example, in some states in the USA, NPs can practice independently without physician oversight, while in other countries, there may be strict collaboration requirements with doctors.

Specialization Scope: The opportunities for specialization can also vary, depending on the needs of the healthcare system in a given country. In summary, the role of Nurse Practitioners and similar advanced nursing roles has developed significantly and differs by country.

5. Known Attempts to Mitigate the Shortage of Medical Staff, Including Doctors, by Increasing the Responsibilities and Authority of Nurses

There have been attempts to alleviate this situation by increasing the responsibilities and authority of nurses. In the United States, the American Nurses Association and other professional organizations have established the National Nurse Staffing Task Force, which has developed short-term strategies to address the nursing staffing crisis. The proposed solutions include creating healthier work environments, innovative care delivery models, flexibility and work planning, comprehensive compensation packages, and prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Additionally, the importance of listening to nurses' voices and responding to their needs has been emphasized, which can improve job satisfaction and

contribute to employee retention. Furthermore, there is a proposal to expand the number of nursing programs and admit more students to increase the number of graduates. However, there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and the various causes of workforce shortages require diverse approaches depending on the location and type of medical facility [16].

6. Personal Experiences with Implementing 'Advanced Nursing Practice'

LUX MED. Sp. z o.o. is one of the leading private medical companies in Poland, offering a wide range of health services in various financing models, including subscription, Fee-for-Service (FFS), and for public payers. An integral part of LUX MED.'s offer is nursing and midwifery consultations, which play a key role in providing comprehensive healthcare to patients. Nurses who have undergone appropriate training conduct consultations both in-person and via telemedicine, adhering to standards based on medical consultations. They can independently perform physical examinations, refer patients for diagnostic tests, and issue prescriptions. These standards are available in LUX MED.'s internal application [17].

In preventive programs such as the "40 Plus Prevention Program" and "CHUK" (Cardiovascular Disease), nurses play a crucial role. These programs were previously carried out by doctors, but nurses have now taken over these tasks. These programs aim to detect diseases early and promote a healthy lifestyle. Nurses coordinate diagnostic tests, provide health education, and monitor patients' health [18].

LUX MED. also provides coordinated nursing care, ensuring patients receive comprehensive and continuous healthcare. Nurses assess patients' health, plan and coordinate care, educate patients, monitor treatment progress, collaborate with the medical team, and offer psychological support. Modern telemedicine technologies enable nurses to remotely monitor patients and conduct online consultations [18].

At LUX MED., nurses and midwives play a key role in conducting various medical consultations, providing patients with health support in many areas [18]. Below are the main types of consultations conducted by nurses and midwives at LUX MED. These consultations cover a wide range, from health prevention to infection treatment to managing chronic diseases.

Additionally, LUX MED. offers specialized consultations conducted by midwives, who support women at various stages of life, from childbirth preparation to breastfeeding support and family planning. Nurses and midwives play a key role in patient education, care coordination, health monitoring, and collaboration with doctors, ensuring the consistency and continuity of health services [18].

Nursing Consultations

1. Preventive Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Detect potential health threats and promote a healthy lifestyle.

- **Scope:** Screening tests including blood tests, ultrasound and X-ray examinations, blood pressure measurement, BMI indicators, dietary advice, and education on physical activity ^[18].

2. Consultations at the Infection Treatment Center:

- **Purpose:** Diagnose and treat infections.
- **Scope:** Health interviews, physical examinations, medication prescriptions, monitoring of the patient's health condition, and referral to a specialist doctor if necessary ^[18].

3. Dermatological Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Treat skin problems.
- **Scope:** Diagnosis and treatment of acne, corns, warts, and education on skin care ^[18].

4. Consultations Related to Chronic Diseases:

- **Purpose:** Monitor and manage chronic diseases.
- **Scope:** Control health parameters (e.g., blood sugar for diabetics), patient education, support in following medical recommendations, physical examination, and medication prescriptions ^[18].

5. Telemedicine Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Provide access to healthcare remotely.
- **Scope:** Telephone and online consultations, health monitoring, and providing health advice ^[18].

Consultations Conducted by Midwives

1. Prenatal Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Prepare for childbirth.
- **Scope:** Education on pregnancy, childbirth preparation, dietary and lifestyle advice during pregnancy, and check-ups ^[18].

2. Postnatal Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Care for mother and newborn after childbirth.
- **Scope:** Health check-ups for the mother, breastfeeding support, monitoring the health of the newborn, and advice on newborn care ^[18].

3. Lactation Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Support in breastfeeding.
- **Scope:** Breastfeeding techniques, solving lactation problems, and education on the benefits of breastfeeding ^[18].

4. Family Planning Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Advice on family planning and contraception.
- **Scope:** Education on contraception methods, help in choosing the appropriate method, and monitoring side effects^[18].

5. Women's Health Consultations:

- **Purpose:** Care for women's health at different ages.
- **Scope:** Preventive examinations (e.g., cytology, mammography), advice on a healthy lifestyle, and support in reproductive health^[18].

Role of Nurses and Midwives in Consultations

- **Education and Support:** Nurses and midwives educate patients about a healthy lifestyle, self-care, and disease prevention.
- **Care Coordination:** Nurses and midwives coordinate medical care, ensuring the consistency and continuity of health services.
- **Health Monitoring:** Regular monitoring of patients' health, early detection of health problems, and prompt intervention.
- **Collaboration with Doctors:** Nurses and midwives work closely with doctors to provide comprehensive care to patients.

Thanks to the dedication and professionalism of nurses and midwives, LUX MED. patients have access to high-quality health services tailored to their individual needs, ensuring continuous care at every stage of life.

7. Overview of the Potential Implementation of 'Advanced Nursing Practice' to Improve Various Levels of Healthcare

An attempt to identify in which healthcare facilities Advanced Nursing Practitioners (ANPs) can significantly substitute the functions and activities of doctors, especially in situations of medical staff shortages.

Advanced Nursing Practitioners (ANPs) can, in our opinion, significantly substitute the functions of doctors in various healthcare facilities. Examples of such healthcare settings include:

Primary Healthcare: In clinics, doctors' offices, or family health centers, ANPs can diagnose, treat, and monitor patients with various health problems, prescribe medications, and provide health education. In these settings, ANPs often serve as the primary healthcare providers, particularly in rural or underserved areas where access to doctors may be limited^[19].

Long-Term and Geriatric Care: In nursing homes, hospices, and other long-term care facilities, ANPs can manage the care of elderly, chronically ill, or terminally ill patients, providing pain management, support in daily functioning, and coordination of palliative care^[20].

Childcare: In pediatrics, ANPs can conduct routine check-ups, diagnose and treat common childhood illnesses, and run vaccination programs [21].

Psychiatry and Mental Health: ANPs specializing in psychiatry can conduct therapies, manage pharmacological treatments, and support patients with mental disorders [22].

Emergency and Urgent Medical Care: In emergency departments or urgent care, ANPs can assess and treat patients with various acute health conditions, often acting as the first point of contact [23].

In other words, Advanced Nursing Practitioners (ANPs) can be particularly effective in diagnosing and treating specific conditions or clinical situations where their unique skills and approach to healthcare may prove more optimal than traditional medical care. Here are some examples:

- **Chronic Diseases:** Such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, or cardiovascular diseases. ANPs often focus on a holistic approach to managing these conditions, including patient education, health monitoring, and supporting lifestyle changes [24].
- **Primary Healthcare:** In cases of common infections, minor injuries, routine examinations, and vaccinations. ANPs can effectively manage these situations, often providing more accessible and quicker services than doctors [25].
- **Geriatric Care:** In caring for the elderly, especially in managing multiple conditions, mobility issues, dementia, and palliative care. ANPs can provide more personalized and empathetic care [26].
- **Mental Health and Psychiatric Care:** For mild to moderate mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, or adjustment disorders. ANPs can offer therapies, support, and monitor pharmacological treatment [27].
- **Pain Management:** In treating chronic pain, ANPs can effectively combine pharmacotherapy with alternative therapies and patient education [28].
- **Women's Health and Obstetrics:** In pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, and postpartum care. ANPs, especially advanced practice midwives, can provide holistic and continuous care [29].
- **Childcare and Early Detection:** In pediatrics, particularly in monitoring development, vaccinations, and common childhood illnesses [30].
- **Palliative and Hospice Care:** In caring for terminally ill patients, where ANPs can focus on pain and symptom management and emotional support for patients and their families [31].

8. The Role of Nursing Schools and Pilot Facilities in a Comprehensive Plan to Implement 'Advanced Nursing Practice'

Advanced Nursing Practice (ANP) represents an innovative response to contemporary challenges in healthcare systems, characterized by increasing patient demands and staff shortages. However, implementing ANP requires coordinated actions at many levels, with the crucial roles of nursing schools and pilot facilities.

Role of Nursing Schools

Nursing schools play a fundamental role in preparing the workforce for advanced nursing practice. Their involvement is key in several basic areas:

1. **Educational Programs:** Nursing schools are responsible for developing and implementing educational programs that provide the necessary knowledge and skills for advanced nursing practice. These programs should include advanced pharmacology, pathophysiology, diagnostics, and healthcare management. Additionally, an important element is education in scientific research and evidence-based practice, enabling ANPs to make clinical decisions based on the latest scientific achievements [\[32\]](#).
2. **Continuing Education:** Given the dynamically changing challenges in healthcare, nursing schools should offer continuing education programs that allow ANPs to update and expand their knowledge. In this context, courses and seminars on new treatment methods, medical technologies, and changes in legal regulations are essential for maintaining high levels of professional competence [\[33\]](#).
3. **Collaboration with Clinical Practitioners:** The effectiveness of educational programs requires close collaboration between nursing schools and clinical facilities. Such collaboration allows for practical training of students in real clinical settings and integration of theory with practice. Internship and professional practice programs, organized in cooperation with healthcare facilities, are a key element in preparing nurses for advanced practice [\[34\]](#).

Role of Pilot Facilities

Pilot facilities serve as innovation labs and best practice centers in the process of implementing advanced nursing practice. Their functions are multifaceted and include:

1. **Testing and Optimizing Care Models:** Pilot facilities are ideal for testing new healthcare models involving ANPs. By implementing and monitoring different approaches to patient care management, these facilities can assess the effectiveness and safety of ANP in clinical practice. The results of these tests provide valuable data that can be used to optimize processes and expand best practices on a larger scale [\[35\]](#).
2. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Pilot facilities are responsible for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of implemented actions. Regular analysis of clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness allows for identifying areas needing improvement and confirming the effectiveness of advanced nursing practice. These activities are crucial for ensuring continuous improvement and adaptation of the ANP model to changing healthcare needs [\[36\]](#).
3. **Training and Support for Staff:** Pilot facilities play a significant role in training and supporting medical staff. Organizing workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs for nurses and other healthcare workers enables the development of competencies necessary for effective implementation of ANP. This support also includes efforts to increase awareness and acceptance of the new role of nurses among doctors and medical administration [\[37\]](#).

Synergy between Nursing Schools and Pilot Facilities

Effective implementation of advanced nursing practice requires synergy between nursing schools and pilot facilities. This collaboration should include:

- **Joint Research and Development Projects:** Collaboration in scientific research and development projects allows for identifying best practices and developing innovative solutions in healthcare.
- **Knowledge and Experience Sharing:** Regular exchanges of experiences, organized through conferences, symposia, and scientific publications, enable the transfer of knowledge between theory and practice.
- **Development of Standards and Guidelines:** Joint development of standards and guidelines for advanced nursing practice ensures consistency and high quality of provided health services.

Nursing schools and pilot facilities play a crucial role in the comprehensive plan to implement advanced nursing practice. Their cooperation is essential for ensuring proper preparation of the nursing workforce and effective implementation of new healthcare models. The integration of education, clinical practice, and scientific research forms the foundation for the development of advanced nursing practice, contributing to the improvement of quality and accessibility of healthcare at various levels of the system.

Proposals for Changes in the Polish Healthcare System Based on Conclusions from Study Visits by the Minister of Health in EU Countries

1. Career Path Preparation for Nursing and Midwifery Students

- **Objective:** Facilitate career planning for students and introduce them to the labor market.
- **Proposals:**
 - Develop nationwide career guides that describe career paths for nurses and midwives.
 - Introduce clinical-level mentors to support students in practical vocational learning^[38].

2. Standards of Teaching in Clinical Practice

- **Objective:** Improve the quality of teaching through the direct involvement of nurses in the educational process.
- **Proposals:**
 - Prepare teaching standards to support nurses conducting classes with students and assessing their progress.
 - Implement changes to clinical practice, teaching didactics, and scientific research conducted in academic centers^[38].

3. Formation of Research Teams and Collaboration Networks

- **Objective:** Promote inter-university collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- **Proposals:**
 - Appoint expert researchers responsible for forming research teams focused on nursing practice.

- Create collaboration networks between universities and healthcare entities to facilitate scientific and practical research ^[38].

4. Establishment of an Expert Team

- **Objective:** Develop a strategy for the development of nursing and midwifery by 2030.
- **Proposals:**
 - Establish a dedicated Expert Team to conduct study visits both within the EU and beyond.
 - Create a roadmap and recommendations for implementing the nursing and midwifery development strategy ^[38].

5. Appointment of Experts at the University Level

- **Objective:** Assess and improve processes related to nursing practice.
- **Proposals:**
 - Appoint experts at each university and in University Medical Centers responsible for evaluating processes and conducting research ^[38].

6. Compensation for Students' Professional Practices

- **Objective:** Motivate students to engage in professional practices.
- **Proposals:**
 - Implement principles for compensating students for work in healthcare entities during their professional practices ^[38].

7. Enabling Nurses to Prescribe Medications

- **Objective:** Increase the autonomy of nurses and relieve doctors.
- **Proposals:**
 - Allow nurses to prescribe specific medications according to their specialization.
 - Introduce a registration system and regular training and competency assessments for nurses ^[38].

8. Development of a Portal for Nurses

- **Objective:** Facilitate access to information and consultations.
- **Proposals:**
 - Create a portal for information exchange and consultations related to nursing and midwifery activities ^[38].

9. Systematic Research and Reports

- **Objective:** Monitor and analyze the impact of medication prescribing by nurses.

- **Proposals:**

- Conduct regular research and prepare reports on the practice of medication prescribing by nurses^[38].

10. Introduction of a Second Level of Advanced Nursing Practice Education

- **Objective:** Enhance the qualifications of nurses to the level of advanced practice.

- **Proposals:**

- Introduce a second level of education that enables nurses to acquire advanced clinical and managerial skills.

Implementing these proposed changes can significantly improve the quality of nursing education and the functioning of the Polish healthcare system, contributing to better preparation of medical staff and more effective delivery of health services ^[38].

9. Conclusions

The implementation of Advanced Nursing Practice (ANP) can be a key element in the reform of the healthcare system, which is struggling with a shortage of doctors and nurses. The analyses conducted, experiences from various countries, and local initiatives indicate several benefits resulting from expanding the responsibilities of nurses. The main conclusions from the article are presented below:

1. Substitution of Doctor and Nurse Functions:

- The advanced education of ANP nurses enables them to take over some of the doctors' duties, especially in primary healthcare, which can significantly relieve the healthcare system.
- In countries such as the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, ANPs play key roles in healthcare, contributing to improved accessibility and quality of medical services.

2. Role of ANPs in Various Healthcare Sectors:

- ANPs can effectively operate in primary healthcare, long-term and geriatric care, childcare, psychiatry, and emergency medical cases.
- Their holistic approach to patients, combining medical knowledge with case management skills and health education, is crucial in managing chronic diseases and promoting health.

3. Education and Continuing Education:

- Nursing schools play a crucial role in preparing nurses for advanced practice by providing appropriate educational programs, continuing education, and collaborating with clinical practitioners.
- Pilot facilities are essential for testing and optimizing care models involving ANPs, monitoring outcomes, and training staff.

4. Implementation of ANP in the Polish Healthcare System:

- Poland should draw from the experiences of other countries and develop its own models of advanced nursing practice. Necessary actions include developing career paths for nurses, introducing teaching standards in clinical practice, and fostering collaboration between universities and clinical facilities.
- It is also important to introduce regulations that allow ANP nurses to prescribe medications, which will increase their autonomy and relieve doctors.

5. Social and Economic Benefits:

- Implementing ANP can improve the accessibility of medical services, especially in rural and poorer regions where access to doctors is limited.
- ANPs can provide effective care for patients with chronic diseases, which can reduce the number of hospitalizations and healthcare costs.

In summary, advanced nursing practice represents a promising response to the challenges of contemporary healthcare systems. Its implementation requires coordinated actions at many levels, but the potential benefits for both patients and the entire healthcare system are significant.

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