

Bridging Borders: Nepalese Healthcare Professionals in Europe - “Brain drain” to “Brain circulation”

In recent decades, Europe has witnessed a steady rise in the number of Nepalese healthcare professionals contributing to its diverse and evolving medical landscape. Across European continent, Nepalese doctors, nurses, midwives, public health specialists, and allied health professionals are embedded in diverse health systems, from national health services to university hospitals, elderly care facilities, community health services and research centres. Their roles range from frontline clinical work as a physician, teaching and training to guideline development, and quality improvement projects. This positioning allows them to experience both the strengths and the limitations of European health systems, including the uses of digital health, multidisciplinary team based care, continuous professional development, and patient centred service design. Their presence not only helps address workforce shortages but also enriches the cultural competence of care. This migration of Nepalese healthcare professionals in Europe, however, is not merely a story of opportunity. It is also a narrative shaped by global inequities, workforce imbalances, and personal sacrifice. Nepal, a country with limited healthcare resources, continues to train skilled professionals who often seek advanced training, better career prospects, and financial stability abroad. While this “brain drain” raises concerns about domestic healthcare gaps, it simultaneously opens avenues for transnational knowledge exchange and professional growth. European healthcare systems, many of which face aging populations and increasing demand for care, have come to rely on internationally trained healthcare professionals. Nepalese healthcare professionals are often praised for their adaptability, resilience, and strong work ethic. Yet, their

journey is not without challenges. Language barriers, professional re-certification processes, cultural adjustment, and rare but occasional discrimination can hinder their full integration and well-being in Europe.

As Europe continues to diversify, inclusivity within healthcare systems must go beyond rhetoric. Recognizing and valuing the contributions of Nepalese Healthcare Professionals is not only a matter of fairness but also essential for delivering equitable patient care. Their unique perspectives, shaped by experiences across different health systems, are invaluable assets in an increasingly interconnected world.

There is an urgent need for policies that both support migrant Nepalese healthcare professionals and ensure ethical recruitment practices. Bilateral agreements between Nepal and European countries could help balance workforce mobility with domestic healthcare needs. Additionally, structured mentorship programs, language training, and simplified recognition of foreign/nepalese qualifications can ease transitions in European system and enhance job satisfaction. For Nepal, the diaspora of Nepalese healthcare professionals holds immense potential as a bridge between two different systems. Many of these professionals retain strong personal and professional ties to Nepal.

Through informal teachings, professional networks, regular webinars, telemedicine initiatives, research collaborations, and periodic return missions, these professionals can contribute to strengthening Nepal’s healthcare infrastructure while continuing their work abroad. If these

individual connections are harnessed through coordinated efforts, the collective impact can extend far beyond one off visits or ad hoc activities. Encouraging such circular migration models may transform the narrative from “brain drain” to “brain circulation.” More specifically, three concrete roles for the Nepalese diaspora can be envisioned:

Firstly, capacity building and skill transfer through clinical teaching and mentorship, curriculum development and harmonization, leadership, and quality improvement training. Such initiatives work best when they are locally led but externally supported. A second role is joint research and evidence generation. Many Nepalese diaspora professionals in Europe are already engaged in studies on clinical medicine, occupational health, mental health, and health system governance. Partnering with investigators and institutions in Nepal can create collaborative studies, implementation of research and policy level outputs. Finally, European-based Nepalese professionals can contribute to policy dialogue and advocacy by utilizing European health system experience. Particularly, advocating for equitable workforce distribution, patient safety, and mental health integration. Crucially, Nepalese diaspora voices should complement, not replace, the leadership of Nepalese professionals, policy makers, and civil society organizations. Nepalese healthcare professionals in Europe exemplify the global nature of modern medicine. Their contributions highlight both the opportunities and responsibilities that come with workforce mobility. By fostering supportive environments and collaborative frameworks, we can ensure that this movement of talent benefits individuals, host countries, and Nepal alike. In this noble endeavor of bridging borders, The European Journal of Nepalese Healthcare Professionals can play a vital role. The European Journal of Nepalese Healthcare Professionals is well placed to become a bridge building platform between Europe and Nepal by publishing original

articles, case reports from both sides of the globe. Publication of regular Editorials, Expert Opinions and Commentaries can reflect on health learning across both contexts. The journal can stimulate dialogue, disseminate lessons learned, and foster a sense of shared purpose among Nepalese professionals in Europe and Nepal. Furthermore, the journal can encourage dual audience writing: articles that are accessible to both European based clinicians and Nepalese practitioners, using clear language and avoiding unnecessarily technical jargon. This will help ensure that insights flow both ways, not only from Europe to Nepal, but also from Nepal’s unique experiences to European health systems that are themselves grappling with workforce shortages, migration, and health inequities. As we present the inaugural issue of the European Journal of Nepalese Healthcare Professionals, we do so with a profound sense of purpose and optimism. This journal has been established to serve as a platform where scientific excellence, clinical experience, innovation, and collaboration converge to advance healthcare for the benefit of patients and society. Our vision extends beyond publishing research. We aspire to build a vibrant academic community that connects Nepalese healthcare professionals across Europe and around the world while fostering meaningful collaborations with colleagues from all nations and disciplines. We believe that the exchange of knowledge across borders enriches clinical practice, strengthens research, and inspires the next generation of healthcare professionals. The success of this journal will depend on the collective commitment of authors, reviewers, editorial board members, and readers. We warmly invite you to contribute your research, share your expertise, engage in scholarly dialogue, and help us uphold the highest standards of scientific integrity and publication ethics. On behalf of the Editorial Board, I extend my sincere gratitude to everyone whose dedication and support have made this inaugural issue possible.

We hope that the European Journal of Nepalese Healthcare Professionals becomes a trusted source of scientific knowledge, professional development, and international collaboration for years to come.

Thank you for joining us at the beginning of this exciting journey. Together, let us advance knowledge, inspire innovation, and strengthen

healthcare through excellence in research, education, and collaboration.

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