




Commentary

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International flow of Zambian nurses

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Abstract (provisional)


This commentary paper highlights changing patterns of outward migration of Zambian nurses. The aim is to discuss these pattern changes in the light of policy developments in Zambia and in receiving countries. Prior to 2000, South Africa was the most important destination for Zambian registered nurses. In 2000, new destination countries, such as the United Kingdom, became available, resulting in a substantial increase in migration from Zambia. This is attributable to the policy of active recruitment by the United Kingdom's National Health Service and Zambia's policy of offering Voluntary Separation Packages: early retirement lump-sum payments promoted by the government, which nurses used towards migration costs. The dramatic decline in migration to the United Kingdom since 2004 is likely to be due to increased difficulties in obtaining United Kingdom registration and work permits. Despite smaller numbers, enrolled nurses are also leaving Zambia for other destination countries, a significant new development. This paper stresses the need for nurse managers and policy-makers to pay more attention to these wider nurse migration trends in Zambia, and argues that the focus of any migration strategy should be on how to retain a motivated workforce through improving working conditions and policy initiatives to encourage nurses to stay within the public sector.

The complete article is available as a [provisional PDF](#). The fully formatted PDF and HTML versions are in production.



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