



Ministry of Health  
Palackého náměstí 4  
128 01 Praha 2  
Czech Republic

17 October 2014

Dear Mr Svatopluk Němeček,  
Dear Mr Josef Vymazal,  
Dear Ms Alena Šmidová,

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) is the global voice for nursing representing the more than 16 million nurses worldwide. We work to ensure a strong and competent nursing workforce globally and to attain best patient and population outcomes through strengthening the contribution of nurses to health systems.


We understand that nursing education in the Czech Republic has been offered at the tertiary level since 2004 but that there is current dialogue in your country regarding the possibility of moving nursing education back into the secondary school level.

ICN strongly believes it is essential to strengthen initial education for future nurses so as to ensure the changing health care needs of citizens are addressed and nurses are prepared to meet the increasingly diverse and complex care that modern health system delivery requires. The research evidence is clear that a higher level of nursing education results in reduced levels of patient mortality, better patient outcomes and reduced lengths of stay in hospital. In short, saving lives, improving patient experience and reducing costs.

In the current climate of aging populations, increasing burden of chronic and non-communicable diseases, new and re-emerging communicable diseases and the continuous integration of new technologies into care delivery, it is essential that nurses receive the proper education and preparation to practice in this context. Importantly, in order to prepare nurses to meet such complex healthcare delivery needs, nursing students need to have a solid general education background before they start their nursing education.

ICN urges the government of the Czech Republic to move away from consideration of such a significant retrograde change to nursing education in your country. We ask this in the interest of your citizens' ability to access high quality and safe nursing care, and on the basis of better economic value

Yours sincerely,

  
David C. Benton  
Chief Executive Officer

c.c. Czech Association of Nurses