



## RAD-AID Nursing: Leaders in Global Health



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### A B S T R A C T

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RAD-AID International is dedicated to increasing radiology services to poor areas with limited resources and low-income nations (as defined by the World Bank). With the demands of global health continuing to transform, leadership in the education and empowerment of the world's nursing community will be at the forefront in guiding change for improved health outcomes. This article will introduce RAD-AID and nursing leadership opportunities in the field of global health.

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### Introduction

Despite the globalization of the world's economies and extraordinary advances in medicine and technology, it is exasperating that so many people in the world still have little if any access to quality health care. At the same time, it is encouraging to see a rapid growth in the number of organizations and individuals committed to tackling the world's greatest health care challenges.

RAD-AID International, a nonprofit organization affiliated with the World Health Organization, aims to confront these gaps in health care by pioneering radiologic and public health strategies to improve global health for low-resource communities around the world. With a growing base of more than 6,000 international volunteers, 53 university-based chapters in the United States and hands-on programs in 23 countries, RAD-AID has continued to expand its' global outreach making a substantial impact in some of the world's most impoverished communities since 2008 (RAD-AID International, n.d.; see <http://www.rad-aid.org>).

### Global outreach

Using a multidisciplinary team approach founded on values of integrity, diversity, perseverance, and ongoing self-evaluation and improvement, RAD-AID's five key areas (see Figure 1) targeted for sustainable global health program development consist of the following:

- Technological innovation to bring radiologic capabilities to low-resource settings.
- Clinical training to enhance learning capabilities and advanced patient care.

- Public health education to raise awareness on prevention, screening, and importance of treatment.
- Health policy development to improve organizational workflows and access to quality care.
- Research to guide evidence-based health care policy.

### Nursing involvement

With nursing comprising the largest percentage of health care workers in the world (Wong et al., 2015), it is in a position of distinct prominence to address the reoccurring themes of limited access to global health resources and manpower, inadequate nursing and community health education, and insufficient tools to implement operational changes in health care policy. These sorts of global initiatives at the international level provide a conduit for nursing to expand its international expertise and broaden its scope of practice (Wong et al., 2015).

RAD-AID's nursing program aims to support the advancement of its global radiology initiatives by creating and implementing sustainable nursing education and training programs around the world. With a mission to integrate social responsibility and global citizenship into present-day nursing practice, RAD-AID nursing provides opportunities for nurses, and nursing students alike, to serve in various overseas programs focused on nursing education, clinical skills training, research to measure program outcomes, and health policy development to support program sustainability. Global programs are varied and encompass a wide variety of nursing subspecialties, including radiology, women's health, primary care, community health, and oncology nursing.

### RAD-AID annual conference

Notably, during the first weekend in November, RAD-AID's annual conference is held at the Pan-American Health Organization

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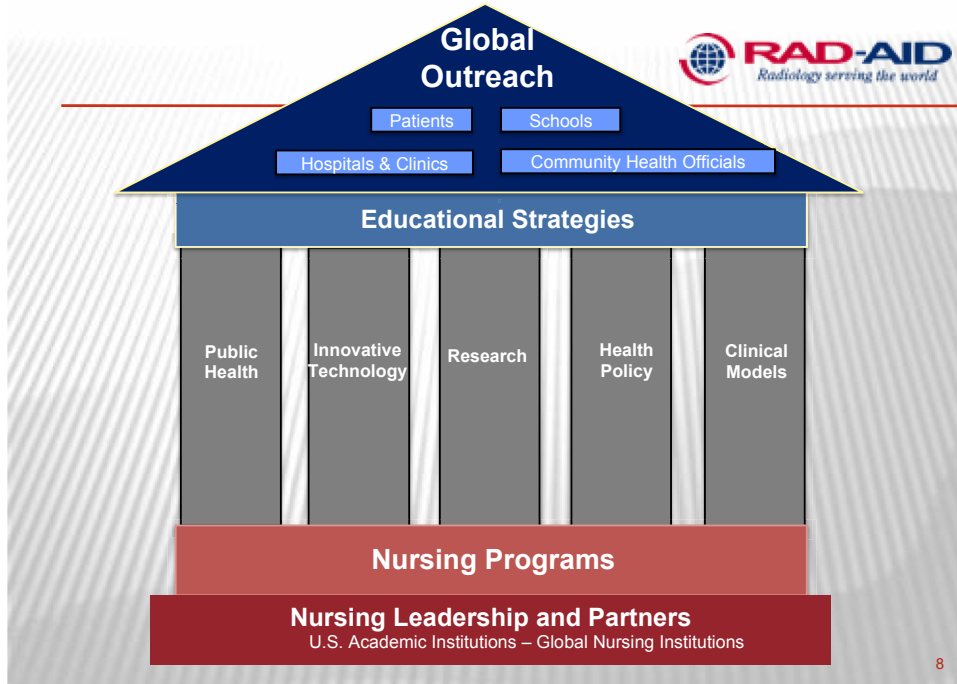


Figure 1. RAD-AID nursing global outreach organizational model. RAD-AID. Reprinted with permission.

in Washington, DC, where members of an international and multidisciplinary community come together to collaborate on innovative strategies to tackle the world's challenges in radiology and global health outreach (Figure 2). Discussion to advance nursing leadership and education in RAD-AID's global nursing programs, centers on providing comprehensive and holistic care patient care. Initiatives in Chandigarh, India, include providing community health education for women being screened on the

Asha Jyoti mobile imaging van for cervical and breast cancer as well as osteoporosis (Figure 3). While in South America, strategies for the development of improving patient outcomes in Guyana aim to focus on clinical skills training and the management of patients undergoing computerized tomography scanning and other radiology procedures.

**Conclusion**

The advancement of nursing as a proponent of world health plays an increasingly important role in modern-day nursing



Figure 2. RAD-AID 2016 International Conference. Left to right: Darlene Whitlock, Kathleen Gross, Jessica Salerno, DeAnn McNamara, Jessica Thompson, Cheryl Jaglowski-Ho, Katherine Duncan, and Patricia DuCharme.



Figure 3. Asha Jyoti mobile imaging van, Chandigarh, India.

practice and has created an urgent need for comprehensive nursing education, training, and research around the world (Wong et al., 2015). Those of us who share this global vision of health realize that by working in partnership with our professional colleagues and international partners, we place nursing at the forefront in safeguarding those communities in greatest need regardless of national boundaries.

Nurses and other health care professionals interested in learning more about RAD-AID's global health initiatives, international programs, and volunteer opportunities to advocate for resource-limited global communities are encouraged to contact:

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