Brain drain cause to severe health-worker shortage in poor countries

According to the report, the UK has long been a primary destination country for doctors and nurses trained elsewhere, particularly India, Pakistan, South Africa and Nigeria, among other countries, owing to previous colonial ties.

The latest statistics from the General Medical Council show that 50 per cent of all doctors and 10 per cent of all nurses in the UK were trained in other countries.

Owing to increased utilisation of health services by an ageing population and insufficient numbers of people trained to replace retiring health workers, many EU member states are relying increasingly on health workers trained in other countries.

The European Commission estimates that the EU will be faced with a shortage of one million health professionals (250,000 physicians, 150,000 dentists, pharmacists and physiotherapists, and 500,000 nurses) by 2020.

According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 25 per cent of all doctors and five per cent of all nurses who were trained in sub-Saharan Africa were working in OECD countries in 2006.

Therefore, the authors of the current report suggested that Africa will be the most affected by the crisis.

They estimate that only three per cent of the world’s health workers are employed in Africa, although the continent has 23 per cent of the world’s global disease burden. The financial cost to Africa of losing trained health workers is estimated to be in the billions, and more than African countries receive in aid for health, they said.

The report also highlights the responsibilities of wealthy countries in recruiting international health workers and calls for internationally coordinated efforts to tackle the global health-worker shortage to prevent the widening of global health inequality.

The report, titled “The health worker crisis: An analysis of the issues and main international responses”, can be downloaded from Health Poverty Action’s website.

Dental Hygienist and Dental Therapist from the region will have the opportunity to learn about new developments in the dental laboratory.

Dental Hygienist and Dental Therapist Forum

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