

Dr. Scharmaine Lawson ([00:15](#)):
For too long, health inequities

Speaker 3 (06:52):

In the Future of Nursing Report, we talk about the importance of engaging in public policy from local to national levels, serving on boards, serving on advisory committees that advise state agencies and federal agencies, for example, volunteering to do that work, to become appointed to those positions. We talk about the importance of nurses engaging with government officials at all different levels.

This is really about using the voice and the expertise of nursing, lifting it up to impact the health, not just of seven patients on a shift, but in addition to that influencing the health of seven million patients or 70 million patients or people, families, thousands of communities by engaging and ensuring that health policies are supportive of achieving equity in health and equity in healthcare in our country.

Dr. Scharmaine Lawson (07:50):

This is the final episode of The Future of Nursing. In this episode, we want to look forward to 2030 by remembering what we've learned throughout the series and explore how we are going to move forward. If we're going to move forward, we must collaborate and work together to put these strategies into place.

Speaker 4 (08:24):

I think what's important to share is that in the United States compared to other developed countries, we have the highest poverty rate, the greatest income inequality, and some of the most poorest health outcomes. And as you know, all this was highlighted more with the COVID-19 pandemic, where the deaths that were occurring in our communities are occurring to black, Hispanic, and really communities of color. I believe that now is the time.

I'm very hopeful that we are going to advance and address the social determinants of health, because I can't see how we remain this way. I understand that we spend the most amount of money in healthcare, but we have the poorest outcomes. It just doesn't make any sense to me. I'm hoping to see that we actually develop this shared agenda with all of the organizations in nursing, out of nursing, and that we all begin to work together.

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Dr. Scharmaine Lawson (15:30):

Ms. Bisognano has seen how nurses around the nation are recognizing the health inequities in the communities they work in, and they're stepping up to address them in unique and creative ways.

Maureen Bisognano (15:43):

I've seen impact, big impact, on all different parts of the population. I've seen nurses working in communities with mothers, starting mothers support groups, so that children are born healthier and they're fed more appropriate food in the beginning so that they end up with a healthy beginning. I've seen nurses work with elderly populations who are at home, working with new models of care to keep them healthy at home.

I've seen nurses in schools really thinking about how do I understand, especially in this COVID time, the impact of COVID on the mental health of young kids and teenagers. We are in such dire straits in the United States in some parts of our country with mental health and resilience.

Dr. Scharmaine Lawson (16:29):

The nursing profession is critical to reducing health disparities and improving the health and well-being of the population. There's a lot of work to be done by 2030. It's going to take the work of individual nurses, educators, policymakers, and health systems to accomplish this. And it's hard work, but it can be done. Many of the clinicians we spoke with have a lot of hope for what the next decade holds for the nursing workforce.

Speaker 5 (17:00):

We are not going to be prepared as a nation unless we can see and feel comfortable with the notion and the fact that our frontline healthcare professional is comfortable with their role.

In a world in which we are increasingly aware of the fact that the line between what happens within the clinic doors and what happens outside the clinic doors to affect the health status of our population, there is a critical need to reassess the ways in which we educate our health professionals and the way in which we deploy them as team members to be able to work with each other and to have a comfort level in working in multiple venues and circumstances.

This report has helped set the stage for accelerated progress of not just the nursing profession, but the whole health system as it moves to meet the challenges and the opportunities of the 21st century.

Speaker 6 (18:09)

We can begin to make some inroads in terms of health disparities. I really feel that that's where we can be. And in terms of health equity, we need more nurses in government, whether it be local, state, federal, we need more nurses on boards who are diverse, who understand the patients that they're working with, who can bring those voices, be at the table when policies are being made. Being able to say, "Hey, this sounds like a good idea, but let's think through. How might this affect X group of people or Y group of people?"

Dr. Scharmaine Lawson ([19:55](#)):

The recommendations in the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 Report have a specific goal, the aim to ensure that nurses are inspired, supported, valued, and empowered to chart a path forward so that all people have what they need to live their healthiest lives. The nursing profession must focus on educating and developing nurses, including advanced practice nurses, to work competently in home, community based, and acute care settings.

These efforts can then build a culture of health and health equity in America. And there's no time to waste.

Speaker 8 ([20:33](#)):

Nurses can't solve all of the problems by themselves, but nurses can play a role in reaching out to others within the healthcare sector, other professionals, so that we can comprehensively deal with the challenges our patients face.

Sue Hassmiller ([20:50](#)):

I would encourage nurses no matter where you work, no matter where you are in the spectrum of understanding health equity and what you've been working on to really have crucial conversations at work and do so with kindness and respect and patience.

Dr. Scharmaine Lawson ([21:09](#)):

Like Sue