

Nurses at the Heart of a Prepared and Ageing World. In the present scenario, leaders all over the world focus on two pressing health challenges: pandemic preparedness and healthy ageing. At the Malaysian Journal of Nursing (MJN), we believe preparedness must begin with the health workforce, and it must begin before the next crisis strikes. Many health care workers lost their lives in previous pandemics. The continuing risks faced by frontline staff in recent outbreaks remind us that nurses are always the first line of defence. Delays in global agreements on pandemic preparedness are a risk the world cannot afford. Nurses lead surveillance, vaccination, infection prevention and control, emergency response and community resilience, and they must be adequately staffed, protected and supported long before an emergency arrives. Pandemic preparedness is not possible without the nursing workforce.

Equally urgent is the global demographic shift. The number of people aged 60 and over is projected to rise, with around two-thirds living in low- and middle-income countries. Ageing populations bring rising chronic disease and complex care needs, and older adults are among the most vulnerable during outbreaks, so resilient, interprofessional health systems must be built in advance. At the same time, amid serious nursing shortages, we must retain the knowledge and mentorship of experienced older nurses through fair and inclusive working conditions. Investing in nurses is investing in a world that is both pandemic-ready and age-ready. In this regard, MJN attempts to put forward the views of researchers, educators and practitioners to create guidelines that translate these responsibilities into engagement. MJN, in this issue, has included research on nursing management, workforce well-being and retention, and on nurse-led, family-centred and digital care for patients ranging from preterm neonates to older adults with chronic disease, to generate evidence that turns these commitments into action.

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