Revised ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses reflects importance of positive practice environments and evidence-based practice

Geneva, Switzerland, 3 December 2012 – The International Council of Nurses’ newly revised Code of Ethics for Nurses highlights the importance of work environment and evidence-based practice. A guide for action based on social values and needs, the Code has served as the standard for nurses worldwide since it was first adopted in 1953.

“This is a critically timed publication,” said ICN’s Chief Executive Officer, David Benton. “Now, more-than-ever, nurses are facing major ethical dilemmas as governments struggle to contain costs. This publication provides an essential tool - a compass - to help navigate the challenges ahead”.

The 2012 revised edition includes the nurse’s role in developing and sustaining a core of professional values, creating a positive practice environment, maintaining safe, equitable social and economic working conditions, sustaining and protecting the natural environment and contributing to an ethical organisational environment.

The ICN Code of Ethics is regularly reviewed and revised in response to the realities of nursing and health care in a changing society. It makes it clear that inherent in nursing is respect for human rights, including the right to life, to dignity and to be treated with respect. Used as a guide by nurses in everyday choices, it supports their refusal to participate in activities that conflict with caring and healing.

In a handy pocket size, the 2012 Code of Ethics for Nurses, is available on the ICN website for downloading. ICN requests all nurses to help with its dissemination to schools of nursing, practising nurses, other health professions, the general public, consumer and policy-making groups, human rights organisations and employers of nurses.

Note for Editors
The International Council of Nurses (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

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