

On our cover this month, Tung Tran, RN, hangs an IV bag for a patient in the ED at University of Miami Hospital. Nursing has long been a profession dominated by women, but more men, such as Tran, are starting to go into the field.

Even though the number of male nurses jumped from 45,060 in 1980 to 202,491 in 2008, men still make up less than 7% of all RNs, according to the 2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses. Although traditionally male-dominated



Photo © Getty Images.

health professions are starting to become more gender balanced (nearly 50% of medical school graduates in 2009 were women, for example), men continue to be underrepresented in nursing. Cultural bias—that nursing is women's work—remains a powerful barrier that keeps many men out.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, highlights the importance of recruiting more male nurses to meet the goal of a more diverse nursing workforce. Their unique perspectives are also needed: male patients may be more comfortable discussing conditions related to sexual and reproductive health with other men than with women.

The IOM report calls for academic nurse leaders to partner with health care organizations, school systems, and community organizations to help recruit nurses from underrepresented groups. A leading organization in this movement is the American Assembly for Men in Nursing, which has awarded more than \$50,000 in scholarships to male nursing students since 2004. The economy plays a role as well. Nursing offers a stable work environment and relatively high wages at a time when other industries are offering fewer job opportunities.

For more on the challenges of recruiting and retaining men in the nursing profession, see "Men in Nursing" in this issue.

—Michael Ferguson, senior editorial coordinator ▼

On the Web

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WHAT WE'RE BLOGGING ABOUT

- Donna Sabella, a mental health nurse and AJN contributing editor, provides resources and tips for health care providers in "Post-Sandy Emotional Self-Care for Nurses and Others" (<http://wp.me/prthD-3pZ>).
- Marcy Phipps, BSN, RN, draws on her nursing experience in her response to the novel *The English Patient* in "The Patient with No Name: When Nursing Illuminates Literature" (<http://wp.me/prthD-3pv>).
- Read "Appreciating War-Time Nurses the World Over," by Peggy McDaniel, BSN, RN, for a historical perspective on the one Australian nurse who survived the Radji Beach massacre in World War II (<http://wp.me/prthD-3pl>).

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ON TWITTER, FACEBOOK, AND OUR BLOG

"My job is hard enough in a stable and safe environment. I cannot imagine what the nurses at the front lines experience." **"Nurses are being robbed of the time they would like to spend with their patients, and patients are being robbed of quality care."** "Our nurses rode around on almost empty tanks and continued to provide care the rest of the week [following Hurricane Sandy] and beyond to the residents of Staten Island. . . . One nurse almost walked into a live wire. Some left their own devastated homes to see their patients."

JANUARY PODCASTS

- **Monthly highlights:** Listen to AJN editors discuss the contents of the January issue. 🔊
- **Behind the article:** Editor-in-chief Shawn Kennedy speaks with
 - Bonnie Gance-Cleveland, author of this month's *Viewpoint*, "Motivational Interviewing for Adolescent Obesity." 🔊
 - Brent Robert MacWilliams, Bonnie Schmidt, and Michael R. Bleich, authors of "Men in Nursing." 🔊 ▼