

Caring Beyond Borders: Comparing the Relationship between Work and Migration Patterns in Canada and Finland

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Abstract (Summary)

We discuss from an explicit gender lens the key contextual factors that shape nurse migration patterns through the cases of Canada and Finland. We employ a context-sensitive, comparative case study approach drawing upon documentary data from primary and secondary sources analyzed according to key themes that were both emergent and based on a systematic review of the nurse migration literature. Despite the recruitment of foreign care workers being frequently raised in public debate as a solution to the care shortage in both Canada and Finland, there is still little evidence to show that this is happening to any great extent. This is particularly the case for Finland. Our analysis does, however, confirm how the migration process is linked to the devaluing of care (in terms of wages and working conditions), which is in turn connected to recent neo-liberal reforms, pushing some nurses from the country in which they were trained to better remuneration and working conditions somewhere else. We shed light on how the impending nursing shortage can be addressed in Canada and more generally.