LEADERSHIP means different things to different people. For example, it might be a position of authority or perceived power. It might be a role on a team or a persona someone carries with them. However you define a leader, a personal element must be considered. As they say, with power comes responsibility. Leaders have a responsibility to uphold values and to clearly communicate and emulate those values.

ANA’s value of collaboration was evident in a recent experience in the Middle East. As a follow-up to a successful nursing conference in 2015 co-hosted with King Faisal Specialty Hospital and Research Centre in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, ANA conducted two workshops to advance nursing excellence in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), hosted by Cerner Middle East in its Dubai offices.

“Having ANA conduct workshops in the Middle East was a gift to nursing,” stated Deirdre Stewart, chief nursing officer of Cerner Middle East and a participant in the workshop. “The leadership exhibited by the ANA team raised the value of nursing in this growing healthcare environment and positioned ANA well for future work in the region.”

More than 60 nurse leaders from across the Middle East convened in Dubai for the two simultaneous workshops that advanced elements of transformational leadership, communicated the importance of applying evidence-based research, and outlined the use of big data and the role of data analytics in the changing healthcare landscape, among other important topics.

“Providing a forum for nurse leaders in the Middle East to develop their professional skills and to collaborate and share best practices was a rich experience that we will continue to advance in the years to come,” added Stewart.

**Cultural leadership**

Dubai is a land that exudes a sense of competition and opportunity to advance innovation. The investment in health care and the growing presence of healthcare advancements are evident throughout the country; the Ministry of Health even changed its name to the Ministry of Health and Prevention. This forward-thinking effort demonstrates leadership and communicates the value placed on health—not just curative but also preventive.

In the United States, integrating health into the healthcare landscape has been a mantra of many leaders for decades. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has played a key role with the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force to develop and define health objectives for the nation for more than 30 years. However, the diffusion of innovation can take anywhere from 7 to 10 years—even 15 years.

The UAE has demonstrated that with committed leadership (including vision and hefty resources), anything is possible. While the country and region appear to be taking cues from Western medicine and applying technological advances throughout their hospital and healthcare delivery systems, the entrepreneurial element seems more prominent in their desire to become a global leader of health and healthcare.

“I’ve seen incredible growth and advances in innovation that will have a profound impact on the health of the region,” stated Mike Pomerance, managing director of Cerner Middle East. “Investing in professional development is paramount to ensuring an engaged and innovative workforce, which will increase organizational efficiencies, effectiveness, and the bottom line.”

Leadership can be reflected through a culture, an organization, and an individual—and it can take many forms. Acts of leadership to advance a cause, leadership to open doors of possibility, and leadership to create a foundation upon which others may grow, build, and influence the world reflect a sense of values that all may emulate. How will you demonstrate leadership? What values will you draw on to leave a legacy in leadership?

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