**Abstract**

Medical workforce planning is critical to a country’s ability to provide adequate health care to its residents. Long-term planning must be based on sufficient, high-quality data. In Israel, the medical workforce is on the verge of a crisis despite many steps taken in recent years for long-term planning. Discussions on the need for such planning in Israel peaked in the 1990s as part of the recommendations of a State Commission of Inquiry into the healthcare system prior to the enactment of Israel’s National Health Insurance Law in 1995.

**Methods:** The study uses historical research methods and is based on the final reports of the Commission and other archival materials, including testimonies from nurses and healthcare experts, and interviews with experts from the Israeli Ministry of Health who were involved in decision-making.

**Findings:** Following testimony from Israeli expert witnesses and three experts from abroad, in 1990 the Commission recommended mandatory licensing and re-licensing for all employees in the health system, the closure of two medical schools, the conversion of a dentistry school into a training center, and the adoption of solutions to increase”qualified and practical nurses. It was recommended to conduct nursing training in nursing schools instead of, or in parallel with, academic settings.

**Conclusions:** The Netanyahu Commission did not focus on the question of human resources. Its recommendations were based on the reality at the time, and on the situation in other countries. Its recommendations regarding nursing and medicine were never implemented. Instead of closing academic nursing frameworks, 10 college tracks were added. No medical schools were closed, but two were added. The enactment of the National Health Insurance Law in 1995 did not change Israel’s medical personnel shortages despite the Commission’s recommendations, and as of 2024, Israel continues to suffer a shortage of medical personnel.