

The Effect of Nurse Staffing on Patients Perceived Care

Abstract: The literature search conducted was used to study the relationship between nurse staffing levels and patient satisfaction with nursing care. The research question guiding this literature search was “What impact does staffing have on care?”. The interest in this topic was inspired by grievances shared by patients and staff throughout clinical rotations and curiosity as to how staffing ratios may impact how patients perceive their care. The PICOT question is as follows: In discharged patients, how do fully staffed units compared with short-staffed units affect patient satisfaction levels during their inpatient experience? From the literature review, it was found that as nurse staffing declined, so did the patient-perceived quality of care and their loyalty to the respective hospitals. Also, as the percentage of assistant nurses to registered nurses increased, the patients reported poor care and decreased nursing guidance. While more research is needed on this prevalent issue, a recommendation of how nurse staffing issues could be changed is to increase nurse staffing visibility, especially in units with poor reported patient outcomes in regards to staffing levels; moreover, this could be done with mandatory rounding by all staff (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, assistive personnel, etc.) as well as bedside report between shifts. Furthermore, nursing staff could be supported by hiring licensed practical nurses to support registered nurses, which would cost less than recruiting more registered nurses. Increased staff flexibility could be achieved by hiring more part time staff, rather than solely resorting to overtime for the current full time staff. Another recommendation to support nurses is incentives, monetary and otherwise. Shift differential provides incentive for nurses to pick up more shifts or different shifts, and social events outside of work can improve morale by building connections within the unit, creating comradery and decreasing turnover by improving attitudes toward work.

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