

Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue in Emergency Nurses

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Background (including Aim)

Aim: Describe the prevalence and correlation of CF, CS and related work stressors in ED nurses, working in an Australian health service.

CS in ED nurses is likely to make a difference to quality of care patient outcomes and to staff retention. Conversely, ED nurses also risk developing CF. They are routinely exposed to suffering, and workplace pressures. CF in staff can create negative effects on individuals, work colleagues, and organisational functioning. The validated 'Professional Quality of Life Scale' (ProQOLv5)¹ is commonly used to measure CS and CF (as a combination BO and STS). The prevalence of CF in ED nurses is unknown.

Methods

Descriptive cross-sectional survey.

Data collection:

- Survey instrument: demographic questions; ProQOLv5 (measure CF and CS); open-ended questions (contributing factors to stress).
- Convenience sample nurses, drawn from three ED's (large healthcare organization Southeast Melbourne, Australia).
- Data collected via 'survey monkey' software, raw data, analysed in SPSS software.

Analysis:

- Demographic variables analyzed independently.
- Pearson's correlations, t-tests, and hierarchical regression (to assess relationships between demographic variables and CF and CS measurements).
- Cronbach's alpha (to check the validity of ProQOL v5 in this survey)
- Qualitative data: content coded.

Result/s

ED nurses (86) participated.

All nurses reported average (73.3%) to high (26.7) levels of CS. No nurses scored high levels of CF (BO or STS). Most nurses reported average levels CF [average levels BO (76.7%) and average levels of STS (68.6%)]. Demographics of participants were explored. One significant correlation between CS and ED nursing education was found. New insights into what is rewarding and what is exhausting were gained from the qualitative data. New contributing elements to stress clustered around job associated care delivery

elements, human resource and organisational elements, ED job specific elements, patient and family social elements, professional elements and personal elements.

Conclusion/s

Regarding prevalence, average levels of CF were found. Demographic correlations revealed a link between CS and nursing education. Open-ended questions exposed new insights into elements contributing to stress.

References

Stamm, B. (2010), The Concise ProQOL v5 manual, 2nd edn, Retrieved 31/05/2014, from http://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_Concise_2ndEd_12-2010.pdf