

The current ethical dilemma I chose is workforce shortage. Over the past three years we've noticed a substantial shortage in the number of nurses available to provide quality patient care. This shortage is affecting not only the hospital settings but other healthcare facilities such as nursing homes. The shortage of nurses in the world is causing nurses to be responsible for a greater patient loads and longer work hours. Not only are the nurses being affected, the nurses' aides or patient care technicians are being overworked as well. Provision 5 of the 9 ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses states, "The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth". Not only does nurses need to promote health and safety for their patients, but they also must promote health and safety for themselves. Working longer hours and picking up additional shifts increases the risk of things such as stress, personal injuries, medication errors etc.

Nursing shortages are leading to burn out. According to Ryu & Shim (2021), this may increase the risk of in-hospital safety incidents, such as medication errors, patient identification errors, inappropriate operation of medical devices and injury from injection syringes". Burn out is not only affecting nurses physical and mental wellbeing but it is causing a lack of motivation to work as a nurse. The pandemic caused a lot of nurses to leave the field due to the overwhelming amount of stress they were experiencing. They felt as if they were being overworked and underpaid. Sometimes the nurses feel obligated to pick up the extra shift on their day off so that their unit is not short staffed. But rather the unit is short staffed, or a tired devoted nurse come in on her day off put patients' health is at risk. The lack of sleep or heavy patient load is a risk for a lot of avoidable errors. Self-care is essential as nurse to balance out the areas in life that could cause more stress.

Ryu, I. S., & Shim, J. L. (2021, November 20). *The influence of burnout on patient safety management activities of shift nurses: The mediating effect of compassion satisfaction*. International journal of environmental research and public health. Retrieved March 2, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8621116/>