

## **Nursing Work Environment: Quality Improvement**

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Nursing practice is constantly evolving to be safer and more efficient. Quality improvement is improving health care by utilizing findings (QSEN Institute, 2020). Patient safety is at the forefront of quality improvement. As a healthcare team member, it is essential to seek continuous improvement in healthcare. To the nurses' utmost ability, the patients' outcomes

and safety must be upheld to the highest standards, and seeking ways to better healthcare is a duty of all healthcare professionals. For patients to receive the best care possible, their healthcare team must be well themselves. However, in today's post-pandemic environment, many burnt-out nurses are leaving or considering leaving the profession. Thirty-four percent of nurses answered that it was likely they would quit their job by the end of 2022 and Forty-four percent of those nurses attributed leaving their job to burnout and a high-stress working environment according to a 2021 study completed by *Nursing in the Time of Covid-19*. Retention of current nurses and their satisfaction in their work environment is essential to patient safety. Covid-19 brought a tremendous additional burden on healthcare systems worldwide that brought up the question, how does the work environment of nurses affect patient safety and how can it be improved? A qualitative study by Mihdawi et al. (2020) studies the relationship between the work environment and patient safety as discerned by nurses in Jordan.

### **Article Summary**

In every career work environment is a known factor in employee performance. To ensure the greatest patient safety possible nursing staff should have a healthy work environment. Nursing is known to be a high-stress career prone to burnout, even more so in recent years due to the additional burden of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nursing work environments must first be thoroughly assessed in order to locate the areas best suited for improvement. The qualitative study by Mihdawi et al. (2020) takes a survey of 570 Jordianin nurses' opinions of their work environment and their perceptions of their work places' patient safety to identify the relationship between nurses' work environment and patient safety.

### **Overview**

The work environment is a leading cause of nurses' career dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction can lead to burnout, and compassion fatigue. Today's health care system needs more nurses which means retention of current nurses is essential and the leading cause of nurses leaving is burnout due to their work environments (*Nursing in the Time of COVID-19*, 2021). The study by Mihdawi et al. (2020) exemplifies the impact that the healthcare team has on each other and how this team's function impacts patient safety which is an aspect of quality improvement competencies (QSEN Institute, 2020). Quality improvement is conducted by utilizing findings to eliminate variables that negatively impact patients' in this case aspects of the work environment may become identified and thus closer to being eliminated (QSEN Institute, 2020).

### **Quality improvement**

In the research article certain aspects of a work environment were found to positively impact nurses' perceptions of patient safety in their workplaces (Mihdawi et al., 2020). Particular aspects in focus were safe staffing ratios, professional communication, and quality improvement training with high levels of nursing participation (Mihdawi et al., 2020) Work environments that had positive feedback for the latter mentioned aspects had higher reports of perceived patient safety (Mihdawi et al., 2020). The proposed quality improvement could be implemented in any type of healthcare setting. Pre-implementation stages to this proposed quality improvement would be staff qualified to interview beneficial new hires, a copy of state reports for areas of improvement needed, or alternately observant managers that may identify staff needs for areas of improved education Additional staff, quality improvement nurse managers/educators, and communication seminars would be necessary throughout the intra- and post- quality improvement stages. A negative, stressful work environment is a costly work environment.

Health care facilities would save resources overall by improving the work environment. Patient safety when compromised is costly. The proposed changes would cost the health care facility the additional staff salaries however, it would make many improvements. Financially the cost of hiring additional staff, and paying for additional training would be the only cost to the institution. Nurses perform better in positive work environments which would directly relate to patient and nurse safety. Nurses are more satisfied with their work environments stay at their jobs longer and become more specialized in their area of care and are better at treating patients. Patients cared for by satisfied, more knowledgeable nurses will have better outcomes and be more satisfied in their care. Overall, the quality improvement would save the health care facility money and resources (Mihdawi et al., 2020).

## References

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