

Nurse Burnout in Primary Care: Quality Improvement

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Quality improvement is an important concept that uses data to monitor the outcomes of care processes. The improvement method works to improve the quality and safety of healthcare systems. Overall, Quality Improvement focuses on current issues and works toward improving the work process. The end goal of Quality Improvement is to continuously look for ways to improve the organization's outputs which could consist of products, services, or outcomes. The QSEN project aims to allow nurses to gain specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for improving the quality of healthcare systems (QSEN Institute, 2020). Quality improvement and the QSEN project work together to help nurses identify what high quality is. When nurses have adequate training and resources on how to provide quality care, they can constantly use those resources to demonstrate constant improvements.

In general, QSEN also helps prepare future nurses with the knowledge and skills to be competent (Altmiller & Hopkins-Pepe, 2019). Focusing on how these concepts can help expand knowledge, skills, and attitudes development is essential. For instance, an individual can describe approaches for change, evaluate the effects of change, and value change as a method used to improve the safety and quality of care (QSEN Institute, 2020). The QSEN project relies on healthcare workers to use specific strategies to improve care because favorable outcomes occur when everyone works as a team. Most importantly, the healthcare system can prosper because physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals can work hand in hand to provide the care patients need. Nurse burnout is an ongoing problem in the nursing profession. Healthcare professionals must work as a team to think of ways to prevent work-related stressors and improve the overall quality of care. Despite constant efforts to provide quality care to patients, nurses often experience emotional and physical exhaustion. Different management techniques

and coping strategies reduce burnout syndrome. Several changes need to be made by institutions to prevent further occurrences of nurse burnout.

Article Summary

The article *The Relationship Between Workload and Burnout Among Nurses* is a quantitative study that focuses on how many stress-inducing factors in the hospital environment increase the risk of burnout syndrome. The quantitative study assessed the prevalence of burnout in nurses. The study sent two thousand nine hundred eighty-two questionnaires, and only 497 primary care nurses participated. In the study, nurses that reported workplace commitment, a good working team, and recognition from the supervisor experienced less burnout. The study shows that higher quantitative demands were associated with higher levels of burnout. When the workload increased, nurses in a better work environment stated a low burnout level (Diehl et al., 2021). The article focuses on the relationship between workload and burnout amongst nurses. The focus is also to develop initiatives to improve workplace commitment and increase collaboration with colleagues to reduce nurse burnout.

Introduction

Nurse burnout can negatively impact both the profession and the institution. Nurses can eventually experience chronic stress that may be difficult to handle. Burnout is known as emotional exhaustion and frustration nurses experience in the clinical setting. Factors like lack of communication, decreased collaboration, emotional dissatisfaction, and increased workload in several departments can cause burnout syndrome. Additionally, burnout can increase with age

and low/moderate work experience. Nurses in oncology, emergency units, and intensive care find it difficult to manage their tasks. It is essential to be aware of factors that lead to nurse burnout. Developing effective coping strategies, focusing on team collaboration, and having a mentor are all solutions to decreasing nurse burnout. The American Association of Critical Care Nurses works toward educating nurses on coping with workplace stressors. AACN focuses on communication, collaboration, and other essential skills to prevent nurse burnout and improve patient care (Diehl et al., 2021).

Overview

In general, implementing actions toward decreasing nurse burnout enhances personal accomplishment so individuals can express their feelings, promote leadership capabilities, and improve workplace conditions (Diehl et al., 2021). The article focuses on the adverse effects of burnout syndrome and how individuals can adopt different coping strategies to decrease burnout and improve a patient's quality of life. Concerning QSEN and Quality Improvement, the project aims to address burnout and job-related stress. The article supports the idea of Quality Improvement by collecting data to monitor the causes and outcomes of burnout syndrome. The results showed that most individuals experienced emotional exhaustion in poor working environments. Improvement methods like adapting specific coping strategies and increasing workplace collaboration can help improve the quality of care and decrease stress levels. The AACN demonstrates quality improvement, observes working environments, and educates nurses with knowledge and skills to improve their working conditions.

Quality Improvement

The Quality Improvement effort can be beneficial to implement at a hospital, preferably in units like the emergency department, oncology, and intensive care unit. As part of the pre-implementation stage, it is essential to go through the institution and schedule a board meeting before implementing a change. Going over major causes or concerns regarding nurse burnout will help establish a good framework and make it easier to know which interventions are essential. Discussing coping strategies with other members and collecting educational resources in the clinical setting is also essential. For the intra-implementation stage, every healthcare professional must complete assigned modules during their free time. The modules will contain different educational topics from communication strategies, collaborative approaches, and mental exercises. Nurses will have to demonstrate strategies they learned from the modules in their workplace. A nurse educator will ensure every staff member completes assigned modules and meets their supervisors to discuss further concerns.

For the post-implementation stage, a Quality Improvement nurse will observe any improvements among staff members. Another survey will be conducted in 6 months to assess changes. The implementation will be costly for the institutions, but it will improve the quality of care and increase patient safety. Nurses will be happy to be provided such resources to decrease nurse burnout. There is an increase in nurse satisfaction when nurses are allowed to communicate their concerns with higher-ups. The goal is to decrease workplace stressors, and nurses will increase their safety. Nurses who are less burned out can focus on their tasks and make fewer mistakes. Patient safety is crucial, and improving a nurse's emotional and physical health will quickly improve the patient's quality of life and satisfaction.

Application Summary

Institutions regulate several nursing practices to decrease nurse burnout. According to a study, increasing collaboration amongst colleagues and improving emotional wellbeing can significantly help reduce workplace stressors and decrease nurse burnout. Collaboration is essential amongst workers because it helps to increase patient satisfaction, improve patient outcomes, reduce medical errors, and improve satisfaction. When nurses find themselves experiencing work overload, they often face being stressed out and emotionally exhausted. When individuals work together as a team, nurses can also experience greater competency in the workplace. Nurses can work on their emotional health by participating in coping strategies like thinking positively and participating in physical and mental exercise. Moreover, several guidelines proposed by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses limit or avoid nurse burnout and create a healthy work environment (Thomas et al., 2019). Most importantly, research has shown that it is beneficial to further the study on nurse burnout in the clinical setting.

Practice

To further understand nursing practice concerning nurse burnout, nurse collaboration, communication, and emotional wellbeing are essential concepts. Collaborative strategies can ease workplace burden in several ways. According to research, nurses worked on team-teaching, co-authoring, and co-presenting at conferences (Thomas et al., 2019). When working alone, nurses find themselves feeling indecisive. Indecisiveness increases frustration and stress in the workplace. Decision-making may be challenging for many individuals, and having a solid

support system can lead to confidence. Also, learning to communicate frustrations with the appropriate person helps to develop a validation of feelings. When there is a lack of validation, it can lead to apathy towards the workplace. According to the study on nurse burnout and coping strategies, nurses part of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses experienced a reduction in frustration when they started adapting collaboration strategies.

Moreover, emotional dissatisfaction plays a vital role in nurse burnout. According to the study, "experiencing stressors in the workplace can lead to burnout, characterized by symptoms of emotional exhaustion and cognitive impairment (Thomas et al., 2019). Participants found a reduction in nurse burnout when they actively confronted stress and solved their problems, sought social support, incorporated positiveness, and engaged in physical and mental exercises. When nurses participate in meditation or take short breaks during their shift, the body triggers the release of endorphins and reduces stress and symptoms of burnout. Individuals state that Nurses in the study stated that work engagement and emotional intelligence are moderators in the work demand and burnout relationship (Diehl et al., 2021). In general, several nursing strategies can decrease the effects of nurse burnout.

Education

Specific guidelines should get implemented to educate nurses on strategies they can use to reduce nurse burnout. Most importantly, knowing the causes of nurse burnout is essential when developing strategies to prevent burnout from happening. The American Association of Critical Care Nurses developed standards for a healthy environment to limit nurse burnout. AACN provides education on skilled communication, collaboration, effective decision-making, appropriate staffing, and meaningful recognition (Thomas et al., 2019). These strategies help to

reduce chronic stress that leads to burnout. For instance, the organization educates individuals on the importance of communicating feelings of frustration with other departments. Communicating frustrations helps nurses develop a validation of feelings. Also, department directors and mentors should reward positive accomplishments and achievements to team members. Giving meaningful recognition allows nurses to develop confidence and reduce medical errors and stress. Such strategies are accomplished through team-teaching, co-authoring, and presenting at conferences. Each nurse should get paired with a mentor who helps guides individuals on tools they can use to improve their work and life balance. For instance, having a calendar and having a fixed time on when to get things done makes the workload seem more manageable. Furthermore, The American Association of Critical Care Nurses educates nurses on ways to improve their work environment and develop strategies to reduce their stress levels significantly.

Research

There should be future studies regarding nurse burnout to assess the effects of the strategies developed by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. The priorities are to assess communication skills, decision-making, and collaboration. More studies should assess nurses' and coworkers' communication skills. *Communication* is an essential skill that nurses need in all clinical settings. Communicating feelings with other team members helps decrease stress levels (Thomas et al., 2019). For instance, there should be a further study to assess how expressing frustrations to other members helps change one's mindset regarding work. In the subsequent study, nurses should get a questionnaire asking for any improvements they exhibited after developing specific communication strategies. Decision-making is also another important concept that needs to be studied further. Decision-making can be very challenging for some

people, and they take time to acquire good decision-making skills. Since indecisiveness can lead to frustration and stress, there should be more research on improving decision-making skills. Nurses in the clinical setting should be interviewed on strategies to improve their decision-making skills. At the end of the interview, if nurses find one specific strategy not working, further research must be conducted.

Moreover, collaboration is an essential priority in the entire healthcare field. Nurses and every healthcare professional must incorporate collaboration into their work environment. A follow-up is needed to gather data on the best collaboration strategies for individuals. If team-teaching and co-presenting at conferences are not working for nurses, there should be a further study to focus on other helpful strategies. For instance, in another study, nurses can be exposed to specific activities and asked to reflect on what activities work best for them. The two main concepts for further study would be the analysis of working with a mentor and working on tasks and projects with other team members in a clinical setting. *Nurse burnout* is a topic that can be reviewed and expanded throughout the years, considering it is a concern that is still occurring in many health organizations.

Conclusion

Quality Improvement and QSEN Competency of Quality Improvement are essential topics to consider. *Quality improvement* is a structured approach that evaluates the performance of systems and processes and determines any improvements needed. The QSEN project helps nurses develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve the healthcare systems and the quality of care for patients (QSEN Institute, 2020). QSEN also helps future nurses to develop competency in the workplace. Individuals can collaborate in teamwork and other coping

strategies to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Nurse burnout is a feeling of emotional exhaustion and frustration that nurses experience in many clinical settings. Factors like increased workload, lack of communication, decreased collaboration, and emotional dissatisfaction play an essential role in nurse burnout. Organizations like The American Association of Critical Care Nurses aim to educate nurses on ways to improve their working environments. Develop specific coping strategies to make it easier for nurses to go about their day and decrease nurse burnout.

Most importantly, nurse burnout can interfere with a patient's quality of care. Thus, institutions must take proper interventions to prevent nurse burnout. Institutions can communicate with mentors, develop appropriate collaboration, and participate in physical and mental exercises. In conclusion, nurse burnout is something that can be reduced but requires sufficient participation and a positive mindset during the education process. Quality Improvement and QSEN work together to change many healthcare institutions and reduce significant concerns like nurse burnout.

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