

**Nursing Burnout and Turnover in the Emergency Department: Quality Improvement**

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## **Nursing Burnout and Turnover in the Emergency Department: Quality Improvement**

Quality improvement in the healthcare setting recognizes nursing processes that directly affect the care of patients and families (QSEN Institute, 2020). It is essential throughout the healthcare system that all members of the interprofessional team recognize and understand the importance of quality improvement, as every individual action of a member of the professional healthcare team may impact patient care. The ability to identify issues, learn from mistakes, interpret data, and work effectively as a professional team are all included in the guidelines established by the QSEN Institute (2020). It must be recognized and appreciated by each member of the skilled care team that every individual has value, and that all members associated with a particular patient must be effective to have a successful outcome.

In taking quality care of patients, valuable skills set by the QSEN Institute (2020) include the ability to communicate patient values and preferences, respect the diversity of human experience, remove any personal barriers or biases, and recognition of the experience from the patient's perspective of care. A quantitative study conducted in the article to be discussed focuses on improving the nurse's work environment with high rates of burnout and turnover in the emergency department (Adams et al., 2019). Burnout and high rates of turnover are a growing issue in the healthcare system throughout many departments; however, emergency departments worldwide are impacted the most. This article aims to collect data on these growing issues, implement interventions to improve overall satisfaction, and analyze whether these actions have positively impacted the nursing profession.

## **Article Summary**

The study conducted in this article by Adams et al. (2019) presents the growing issue of burnout and turnover of nurses in emergency departments due to negative work environments and emotional exhaustion. All participation was voluntary and quantitative data was collected using a demographic questionnaire, the Anticipated Turnover Scale, and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Adams et al., 2019). The study contained an excellent variety of nurses including an equal mix of men and women, nurses with bachelor's and associate degrees, new nurses, and veteran nurses. The main goal of the research was to implement a cultural change toolkit to promote positivity and improve the nursing work environment, decreasing the amount of nurse burnout in the department (Adams et al., 2019).

### **Introduction**

This 2019 study by Adams et al. describes a quantitative analysis of emergency department nursing burnout and turnover, derived from an overall negative work environment. It was determined that these issues happen primarily due to frustration of staffing shortage, lack of departmental appreciation, and high stress (Adams et al., 2019). The main idea of the research is to support several cost-effective interventions to promote departmental positivity and help retention of new and experienced nurses.

### **Overview**

The findings of this study could make a positive impact not only in emergency departments across the country but in numerous other departments hospital-wide. Nurse burnout and turnover have been a growing issue in hospitals, especially due to the struggles faced during

the COVID-19 pandemic in recent years. This article's quantitative method of data collection using the Anticipated Turnover Scale and Oldenburg Burnout Inventory directly aligned with the guidelines of quality improvement set by the QSEN Institute. Guidelines set by the QSEN Institute (2020) describe direct approaches made in changing the process of care and recognizing cost-effective methods of quality improvement. Identifying departmental issues, learning from mistakes, and using the data collected to improve satisfaction with the healthcare system are all identified in the QSEN Institute and relative to the methods of this study (QSEN Institute, 2020).

### **Quality Improvement**

The study conducted relates nursing burnout and turnover to be related to negative work environments such as the volume of patients, staffing shortages, frustration, lack of leadership support, and emotional exhaustion (Adams et al., 2019). Cost-effective methods of quality improvement resulting from this study can promote positivity in the emergency setting, in addition to many other inpatient and outpatient facilities of the healthcare system. The study by Adams et al. (2019) resulted in the implementation of a “kudos” board, a thank you card program, increased leadership rounding, and an anonymous practice-based suggestion box. In the pre-implementation stage barriers such as staffing shortage, lack of leadership presence, and emotional support need to be addressed to uncover the root of the issue in a negative work environment. The article finds that these factors greatly contribute to poor nursing morale, causing frustration and burnout among nurses (Adams et al., 2019). During the intra-implementation stage, quality improvement begins when leadership addresses the emotional concerns of the emergency department nurses, as well as giving them the support they need to feel less emotional stress and frustration. As quality improvement has been established within the healthcare system, post-implementation may involve the long-term support of nursing staff in

which there is an outlet for them to voice concerns, seek emotional assistance, and be recognized for their contribution to involvement with patient care (Adams et al., 2019).

Implementing the cultural change toolkit identified by Adams et al. (2019) would not greatly impact the healthcare institution financially. These methods were found to be very cost-effective and easy to maintain within the department. Patient satisfaction would be improved due to increased satisfaction of nursing staff and an overall increase in worker positivity throughout the department. Along with an increase in nurse satisfaction and appreciation comes a noticeable increase in the quality of patient care. Better nursing care decreases safety risks for both patients and nurses and decreases the amount of burnout and turnover of the healthcare team. Even on days with a high census of patients, nurses would find the work environment to be more tolerable for long-term employment.

### References

Adams, A., Hollingsworth, A., & Osman, A. (2019). The implementation of a cultural change toolkit to reduce nursing burnout and mitigate nurse turnover in the emergency department. *Journal of emergency nursing, 45*(4), 452-456.

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