Introduction

Nurses face many physical and emotional challenges in their work which can lead to burnout, anxiety, and turnover. To support a strong, resilient nursing workforce, it is important to understand the work life of nurses. Increased understanding in these areas has valuable implications for creating healthy, supportive work environments. So far, there is limited research specific to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Licensed practical nurses are one of the three regulated nursing professions in Alberta, Canada. Currently, there are close to 16,000 LPNs registered in Alberta, accounting for approximately 26% of the total professional nursing population. LPNs predominantly provide direct client care in hospitals, community health, and nursing homes/long-term care. To meet the demands of ongoing shifts in our health system, it is critical to support a resilient and stable workforce. Healthy work environments can play a key role given the links shown in previous studies to nurse retention.

CLPNA Member Survey

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) regulates LPNs in Alberta, Canada. The CLPNA is mandated to serve and protect the public. During August 2018, the CLPNA surveyed its entire membership to closely examine the work life of Alberta’s LPNs. Informed by the literature, the survey included questions on work environment, burnout, resilience, intention to stay, health status, and quality of life.

Measures

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI): Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. The degree to which individuals experience these feelings can indicate a tendency towards experiencing burnout.

Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10): A combination of personal attributes that enable an individual to cope with demanding life circumstances.

 Practice Environment Scale of the Nursing Work Index (PES-NWI): Examines nurses’ perceptions of their practice environment, including the nature of their relationships with their leadership and other health care professionals, the adequacy of staffing and resources to provide quality care, and the availability of opportunities to participate in workplace activities.

Intent to Stay: Measures an individual’s intentions to stay with their current unit/facility, employer, and their profession. The higher the score, the more likely the nurse intends to stay with their current unit/facility, employer, and the profession.

Table 1: Demographics, N=4425

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Mean SD</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N %</th>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>N %</th>
<th>Work Setting</th>
<th>N %</th>
<th>Practice Years</th>
<th>N %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39.1 11.5</td>
<td>Female 4067 91.9</td>
<td>Male 308 7.0</td>
<td>Other or no answer 28 .6</td>
<td>Full-time 1732 39.1</td>
<td>Part-time 1626 36.7</td>
<td>Casual 687 15.5</td>
<td>Unemployed 239 5.6</td>
<td>Acute Care 1678 39.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Connor Davidson Resiliency Score Mean SD | 31.1 5.5 |

Results

Burnout by Profession

- Emotional Exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Personal Accomplishment

Burnout by Setting

- Acute Care
- Continuing Care
- Community Care
- Other

Perception of Work Environment

- Participation
- Leadership
- Resources
- Relationships

Intent to Stay

- High likelihood to stay
- Low likelihood to stay

Discussion

Overall, 4,425 LPNs completed some or all of the survey items. This constituted 28% of the 15,860 registered LPNs in the province. We are confident that our study sample is generalizable to the greater LPN population as our sample was almost identical to the reported population demographics in the CLPNA’s 2017 annual report. LPNs have similar burnout scores to other human services professions. LPNs’ burnout scores indicate they have moderate Emotional Exhaustion, low Depersonalization and a high sense of Personal Accomplishment independent of their work setting. Additionally, in Community care and ‘Other’ work settings, LPNs indicate favorable work environments. In Acute care and Continuing care, LPNs indicate mixed feelings with regard to the measured aspects of their work environment. When asked to indicate if they intend to leave their current work environment and the profession, the mean scores indicate that they are highly unlikely to leave. In addition to these findings, LPNs reported a mean resiliency score indicating a high capacity to cope with demanding work and life stressors. Further analysis will confirm these preliminary findings.