Assessment of the Quality of Working Life of Nurses: Care for the Caregiver Supportive Strategies

Deidra Claire Dudley, DNS  
*Nursing, Ochsner Medical Center (OMC) - West Bank, Gretna, LA, USA*  
Maria Nix, MSN  
*Nursing Professional Development Department, Ochsner Health System, New Orleans, LA, USA*  
Shelley Thibeau, PhD  
*Mother’s Milk Bank of Louisiana, Ochsner Medical Center- Baptist Campus, New Orleans 70115, LA, USA*  
Tracey Moffatt, MHA  
*Nursing and Quality, Ochsner Health System, New Orleans, LA, USA*  
Jana Semere, MSHSA  
*Nursing and Patient Services, Chabert Medical Center and Ochsner St. Anne Hospital, Houma, LA, USA*

The American Nurses Association assessed nurse wellness from 2013-2016. Over 14,000 nurses and student nurses reported workplace stress (82%), put their patients health first (68%), and musculoskeletal pain at work (51%). Current evidence suggests that work environment influences nurse well-being and the perception of quality of working life of nurses which in turn impacts quality of patient care and organizational commitment. In 2017, the nursing leadership of a large healthcare system launched a Care for the Caregiver initiative founded on the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Healthy Work Environment Standards.

The purpose of this program was to implement strategies to promote the nurses’ well-being and a higher quality of working life. Nurse leaders identified Care for the Caregiver champions for each of 10 hospital campuses within the system. The multi-year project included: (1) well-being training sessions for champions (mindfulness, stress reduction, sleep strategies, nutrition); (2) nurse wellness expos on each campus; (3) journal clubs to explore healthy work environment strategies; (4) creation of a webpage listing supportive resources to support health and stress management; and (5) an assessment of the perception of the overall quality of working life of nurses prior to the program initiative. The Work Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) scale is a 24-item instrument using a 5-point Likert response format that includes four subscales assessing work-based factors (job and career satisfaction, control at work, working conditions, stress at work) and two subscales assessing non-work life factors (general well-being and home-work interface) to measure the perception of quality of working life.

Results of the nurses’ perception of their overall quality of working life supported the need for the Care for the Caregiver program. Of the (5,139) nurses who received an invitation to participate in the survey, 41% (2082) completed the survey. Fifty four percent (N= 1,124) of nurses reported a higher percentile ranked score (70%-99%) of their overall quality of working life. Sixty-six percent (N= 1374) reported an average percentile ranked score (40%-60%) of General Well-Being, 37% (N= 770) of nurses reported a higher percentile ranked score (70%-99%) of Stress at Work and 35% (N=729) in the lower ranked score (10%-30%). Forty one percent (N=854) of nurses reported a higher percentile ranked score (70%-99%) of Control at Work and 35% (729) in the lower range (10%-30%).

The next step includes examining relationships between organizational commitment, intent to stay, overall quality of working life, and the retention of nurses at this large health system. Additionally, continued strategies to support the well-being of nurses will be implemented and the perception of the overall quality of working life of nurses will be re-assessed.

Future research is needed to explore the perception of quality of working life of nurses nationwide to provide nurse leaders with information to implement supportive strategies that mitigate work stressors and improve nurse well-being. Health policy is needed to create and sustain healthy hospital work environments that support nurse well-being.
Title:
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References:


Abstract Summary:
In 2017, the nursing leadership of a large healthcare system launched a Care for the Caregiver initiative founded on the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Healthy Work Environment Standards. The purpose of this program was to implement strategies to promote the nurses’ well-being and a higher quality of working life.
Content Outline:

I. Introduction

A. Over 14,000 nurses and student nurses reported workplace stress (82%), put their patients health first (68%), and musculoskeletal pain at work (51%).

B. Current evidence suggests that work environment influences nurse well-being and the perception of quality of working life of nurses which in turn impacts quality of patient care and organizational commitment.

II. Body

A. Main Point #1 Promote the nurses’ well-being and a higher quality of working life.

1. Identified Care of the caregiver champions within hospitals

B. Main Point #2 Implement Strategies to support the well-being and quality of working life of nurses

1. Well-being training for champions
   a) mindfulness, stress reduction, sleep strategies, nutrition

2. Nurse wellness expos

3. journal clubs to explore healthy work environment strategies

4. creation of a webpage of supportive resources on health and stress management

5. assessment of the perception of overall quality of working life of nurses

C. Main Point #3 The Work Related Quality of Life Scale measures overall quality of working life

1. Nurses completing the survey resulted in a 41% (N=2082) response rate.

2. 54% (1124) nurses reported a higher percentile ranked score (70%-99%) of their overall quality of working life

3. 66% (N= 1374) reported an average percentile ranked score (40%-60%) of General Well-Being

4. 37% (N= 770) of nurses reported a higher percentile ranked score (70%-99%) of Stress at Work and 35% (N=729) in the lower ranked score (10%-30%).

Conclusion

A. Results of the nurses’ perception of their overall quality of working life supported the need for the Care for the Caregiver program.

B. Future research is needed to explore the perception of quality of working life of nurses nationwide

C. Health policy is needed to create and sustain healthy hospital work environments
First Primary Presenting Author

**Primary Presenting Author**

Deidra Claire Dudley, DNS

Ochsner Medical Center (OMC) - West Bank
Nursing
Assistant Vice President
Gretna LA
USA

**Professional Experience:** Assistant Vice President in Nursing at Ochsner Medical Center (OMC) - West Bank. 37 years nursing experience. Doctorate of Science in Nursing and a Master’s of Science in Nursing Administration, Master’s of Science in Health Services Administration Deidra’s doctoral work focuses on the quality of working life of registered nurses, particularly medical surgical nurses. Deidra was the principle research investigator in the Quality of Working Life study of Ochsner nurses in 2017. co-investigator in the research study on reducing chemo-induced anxiety through diversional activities. Author or co-author of several poster presentations at local and national conferences, and one publication

**Author Summary:** Deidra B. Dudley is the Assistant Vice President in Nursing at Ochsner Medical Center (OMC) - West Bank. Deidra is actively involved in developing nursing staff and leaders, improving departmental processes, quality and safety initiatives, and employee engagement which impacts patient care and satisfaction and organizational outcomes. Deidra is an active member of the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses organization and serves on the Editorial Board of the organization’s Newsletter, MedSurg Matters.

Second Secondary Presenting Author

**Corresponding Secondary Presenting Author**

Maria Nix, MSN
Ochsner Health System
Nursing Professional Development Department
Nurse Clinical Educator
New Orleans LA
USA

**Professional Experience:** Maria Nix is a masters prepared nurse with 11 years expertise in critical care and education. Maria received faculty certification through the Ochsner Leadership Institute. Since 2015, Maria has served as a nurse clinical educator in the nursing professional development department at Ochsner Health System, serving as faculty in multiple professional development programs and on the Care for the Caregiver Initiative project team as system coordinator.

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Third Author

Shelley Thibeau, PhD
Professional Experience: Director of the Mothers’ Milk Bank of Louisiana. As a NICU nurse for 39 years, her interest in breastmilk has expanded to exploring breastmilk immunology research and nutrition associated with preterm infant health.

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Fourth Author
Tracey Moffatt, MHA
Ochsner Health System
Nursing and Quality
Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President
New Orleans LA
USA

Professional Experience: System Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) and Vice President for Quality at Ochsner Health System. She has more than 25 years of progressive healthcare leadership experience in nursing, operations and quality. She provides guidance to nursing leaders to advance quality, nursing professional practice, and safety.

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Fifth Author
Jana Semere, MSHSA
Chabert Medical Center and Ochsner St. Anne Hospital
Nursing and Patient Services
CNO and Vice President
Houma LA
USA

Professional Experience: MSHSA, BSN is the CNO and Vice President of Patient Services for Chabert Medical Center and Ochsner St. Anne Hospital. She has over 20 years of healthcare leadership in nursing and provides direction in quality and safety as well as nursing professional practice. In 2018, Jana completed the CNO Fellowship with the Health Management Academy which included an action project focused on Care for the Caregiver.

Author Summary: MSHSA, BSN is the CNO and Vice President of Patient Services for Chabert Medical Center and Ochsner St. Anne Hospital. She has over 20 years of healthcare leadership in nursing and provides direction in quality and safety as well as nursing professional practice. In 2018, Jana completed the CNO Fellowship with the Health Management Academy which included an action project focused on Care for the Caregiver.