An Integrative Review on Strategies that Impact the Retention of Experienced Nurses

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Purpose:
The Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016-2026 predicts the registered nursing workforce to increase by 203,700 yearly till 2026 but with the average age of nurses in the United States between 45-60-year-old close to retirement age. Research on how to retain the skills and expertise of experienced bedside nurses has historically been lacking as most research examines either the aging workforce trends across industries or hospital level nurse recruitment and retention without the focus on age.

The average age range of our nurses is 45-60 years old, and the lack of new graduates entering the profession due to a decline in educators makes us question what can be done to alleviate this decline. For this purpose, the aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of strategies that impact the retention of experienced nurses.

Methods:
An integrative review methodology was utilized in the development of this research. Research studies were identified using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies were selected from 2010-2020. A total of ten articles were included in this study that focused on the experienced nurse and strategies that impact retention.

Results:
Professional development, organizational and leadership support, workplace environment, and flexibility were key concepts identified by all participants in the ten studies as relevant strategies that would impact retention of experienced nurses.

Conclusion:
Strategies that have been established have shown to be beneficial to better the experienced nursing outlook. Dialogue needs to be encouraged by leadership and lines of communication need to be kept open for continued use of these strategies along with any new idea that arise. As evidenced in this study the older generation gave more importance to workplace environment, supportive leadership and organization, flexibility, and professional development. There is more focus on retention as a whole, by applying more focused strategies based on nursing age might provide for better retention across the age span. Continued research is needed in order to better our retention strategies with nurses from all walks of experience.

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Keywords:
Experienced Nurses, Retention and Strategies

Abstract Summary:

Bureau of Labor Statistics 2016-2026 predicts the RN workforce will increase by 203,700 yearly. The average nurses age in the United States is 45-60-year-old close to retirement age. Research on how to retain experienced nurses has historically been lacking. Most research examines aging workforce or recruitment/retention without focus on age.

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