

NURSING SUPPORT WORKERS AND TASKS PERFORMED, DELAYED OR NOT COMPLETED

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Background

- Increased employment of nursing support workers internationally
 - Little research undertaken in acute hospital environment
- Some changes in role
 - May be performing tasks previously the role of licensed nurses
- Model of implementation varies
 - Substitution v's addition

Terminology

- Nursing support worker
- Unlicensed assistive personnel
- Nursing orderlies
- Nurse aides
- Health care assistants
- Personal care attendants
- Auxiliaries
- Patient care assistants



**Assistant in
Nursing
(AIN)**

(Moran et al., 2011; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; Hasson et al., 2013; NSW Department of Health, 2013; National Health Service, 2013; World Health Organization, 2010)

Secondary Analysis

3 States/Territories

25 hospitals

132 Medical-surgical nursing units

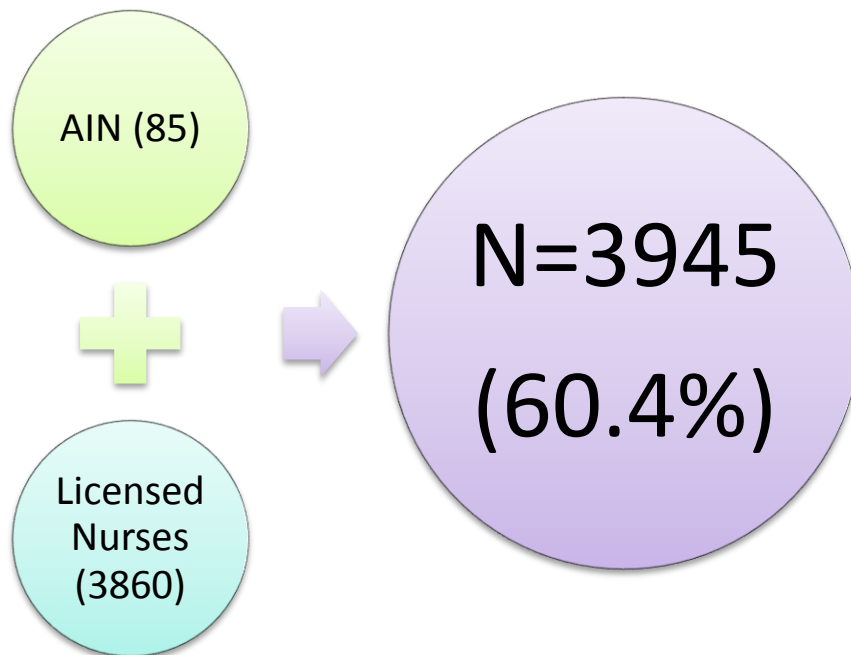
2004

2010

Data collected in all studies

- All direct personal care workers – licensed and unlicensed
- Nurse survey
 - Demographics
 - Experience
 - Employment characteristics
 - 17 questions on tasks performed, delayed or left undone
- Practice Environment Scale
 - (Lake, 2002)
- Environmental Complexity Scale
 - (O'Brien-Pallas, et al. 1997; 2005)
- Nursing unit profile
 - Bed numbers
 - Support services
 - Other characteristics

Overall Response



Analyses

Description & Comparison

Tasks completed by licensed and unlicensed nurses

Tasks delayed or not done by licensed and unlicensed nurses

Regression models

Tasks delayed and not done as dependent variables

Nurse and unit characteristics as explanatory factors

Nurse & Unit Characteristics

Unit		Nurse	AIN	Licensed
Beds	26.8 (14-42)	Age	31	38.6
Unit type		Female	75 (87.2%)	3470 (89.9%)
Medical	61 (46.2%)	Experience	4.4	12.1
Surgical	53 (40.2%)	Temporary Contract	46 (56.8%)	516 (13.6%)
Medical / Surgical Mixed	18 (13.6%)			

Tasks Completed

	AINs	Others
Delivered/retrieved trays	40.0%	33.9%
Performed housekeeping duties	56.0%	49.1%
Arranged discharge referrals and transportation*	16.0%	52.3%
Transported patients	28.0%	16.0%
Performed other disciplinary services (e.g. physiotherapy)*	28.0%	53.9%
Performed ECGs, routine phlebotomy or started IVs*	28.0%	87.2%

*Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Number of Tasks Delayed & Not Done

	AIN	Licensed	Overall
Total tasks delayed*	1.2	1.8	1.8
Total tasks not completed	0.9	1.0	1.0

**Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$*

Tasks Delayed and Not Done

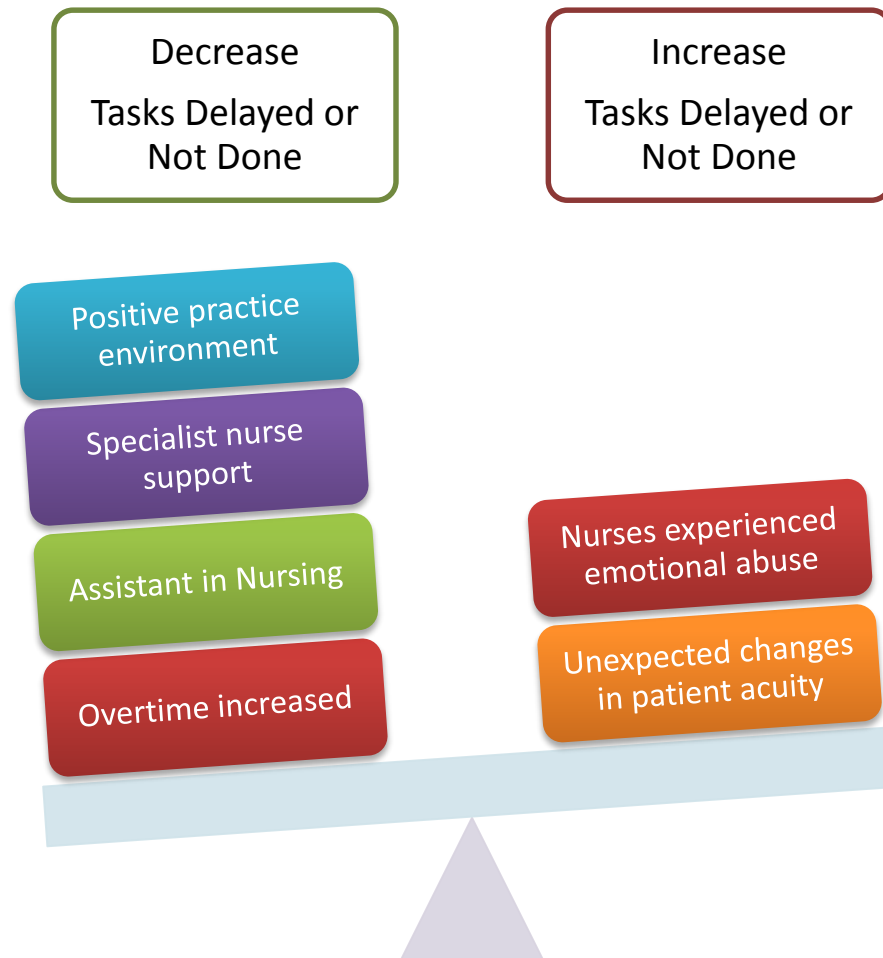
Tasks Delayed*	AIN	Licensed
Responding to patient bell	39.7%	54.3%
Routine vital signs	24.7%	40.1%
Routine mobilisation	23.3%	35.1%
Documenting nursing care	12%	29.5%

*Statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Tasks Left Undone [§]	AIN	Licensed
Comforting patients	30.1%	32.1%
Skin care	20.5%	21.9%
Oral hygiene	23.3%	18.9%

[§]Not significant

Explanatory Factors



Summary

- Nursing support workers reported fewer tasks delayed
 - They undertook more tasks that appear to be in their scope, than licensed nurses
 - But also undertook some tasks possibly out of scope
- Factors on the unit were important for both licensed nurses and support workers
- Other factors should be examined:
 - Model of implementation
 - Substitution versus addition
 - Model of care & delegation
 - Specific role & scope of practice