

# Healthy Work environments for retention of hospital nurses in Japan

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**Purpose:**This study was intended to clarify the factors involved in Healthy Work Environments (HWE) for retention of hospital nurses in Japan.

## Methodology:

The nursing directors of 525 hospitals with 200 or more beds for acute care that are located in Tokyo in Japan were asked to cooperate with the survey, and seven directors showed willingness to cooperate. Finally, interviews were conducted with the 11 nurses who were actually able to arrange an interview with the researcher. Interview questions included, why they were continuing to work at their current workplace, and what they considered necessary for HWE, which would allow them to continue working. The interview survey was carried out after obtaining approval from the Medical Research Ethics Committee of Tokyo Medical and Dental University.

## Results:

The research subjects

- 2male and 9female nursing professionals.
- The mean age :39.3 Years (SD ± 7.3),
- The mean number of years of experience : 14 Years 9 Months (SD ± 9 Years7 Months),
- The mean years of current work place : 11 Years 5 Months (SD ± 8 Years 8Months).

Table 2. Why did colleagues leave the job? (63 codes)

Small category	Large category
Phone calls from the work place during off-duty hours (6)	Overwork 15
Work on holidays / Long working hours (6)	
Severity of night shift work (3)	Seeking career progression 13
Interest in other facilities (3)	
Career progression (5)	
Study abroad (3)	
Interest in other fields (2)	Changes in life 4
U-turn (go back to the home town)	
Difficulty to commute (3)	Psychological stress from which one can't recover 20
Psychological stress (11)	
Lack of confidence (6)	
Incident which one can't recover (3)	
Family reasons (5)	
Feeling uncomfortable to bother other people around (5)	Work-life imbalance 6
Hospital policy	

Table 3. Expect their boss to do (12 codes)

Small category	Large category
Allowing staff to use their own discretion (3)	Understanding and appropriate support 9
Providing appropriate advice (3)	
Communicating with interest (3)	
Being able to take proper action (2)	Leadership in the ward 3
Increasing the number of staff	

Table 4. What's a healthy work environment? (33 codes)

Small category	Large category
Having different working options (5)	Improvement of working conditions 13
Work-life balance (6)	
Higher wage (2)	
Arrangement of personnel and system development (7)	Improvement of the management system 15
Maintaining motivation by recognition of administrators (6)	
Social recognition (2)	
Good human relations (2)	
Organization of events that promote exchanges (3)	Workplace with good communication 5

Table 1. Reasons to continue working (43)

Small category	Large category
To pay living expenses, and take care of the family (economic reasons) ( 8)	Economic reasons 10
Repay a student loan	
For one's own pleasure, such as taking a trip or going out for a meal	
Increased burden of leaving or changing the job ( 4)	Passive reasons to continue working 5
Toning down the desire for leaving or changing the job	
Believing that one should not leave the job ( 2)	Reasons to continue working based on their beliefs 7
Desire to be independent	
Believing that one should fulfill the job ( 4)	
Physically close to the family home	Lay weight on the merits of living and work environments 5
Excellent educational system of the hospital	
Easy to work	
Good balance of work and private time	
Child-rearing support by the children's grandparents	
Job to be proud of ( 2)	Job to be proud of 3
Job to brag about	
Able to reflect on the job	Rewarding 5
Richness	
Rewarding ( 3)	Social contribution 4
Social contribution meaning to one's own existence(4)	
Satisfaction of being able to help others ( 3)	
Loving to provide nursing care in contact with patients(3)	Love being a nurse 5
Very happy to have a favorite job	
Love nursing care as a job	
To improve one's own career	To improve the career
Only just realized how long one has continued working	Never think of leaving the job 2
Has never thought of leaving the job	

## Discussion:

Economic reasons were given by most of the subjects as the reason for continuing to work. The lack of reason that would make them quit has also been mentioned.

It is necessary to enhance the positive factors why they remain in their profession, including a higher level of job satisfaction, and to improve their working conditions, such as reducing overtime and providing better work-life balance. It has also been suggested that the managerial capability of a nurse's superior(Boss) is a key factor to the nurse's HWE.

## Conclusion:

1. Economic reasons are the most common reasons why the 10 nurses continue their careers.
2. Long overtime, not being able to establish a good work-life balance, having to attend meetings or perform other duties on a holiday are some reasons why their colleagues had quit their jobs.
3. Support and strong leadership are expected of superiors.

Based on the above findings, it has been suggested that the management skills of Nursing manager, who are in a position of managing the nursing staff, are key to the creation of nursing professionals' HWE.

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