

# Perspectives of Emergency Nurses with Overcrowding State in Taiwan



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## Background

Emergency department overcrowding is an evolving threat to client safety and healthcare systems worldwide. The nature of complex and multidimensional issues proposed great negative impacts on patients and staff. Evidence shows the overcrowding in the emergency caused by increased number of patients, lack of hospital beds. However lack of study is found on nurses' perspectives of working in the environment. Therefore in considerations of retaining emergency workforce, protecting patients and foster quality of care, a rigorous study using a qualitative approach to address the overcrowding issue is essential.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the emergency nurses' perspectives of overcrowding state and to highlight the importance of collaborative team work as well as sharing our experience of improving quality of care through identifying the emergency nurses roles.

## Results

Main themes of seeking and keeping within boundaries were identified supporting by perceptions of being an emergency nurse as working and continually enduring within a state of overcrowded environment. The identified themes have been supported by three categories, including identifying herself, searching for possible solutions, and going on the situation. The first category was further supported by defining the role of emergency department, characterizing overcrowding and interacting work within an overcrowded environment. The second category was reinforced by searching for possible within multi-factorial emergency in overcrowding, nurses' experience about their professional social behaviors. The last category was, going on the situation, illustrated by the consequences of nurses' work and clients' satisfactions, as well as leading to a psychosocial distress.

## Conclusion

The findings fill a gap in knowledge about how emergency nurses working and searching for their work role within the overcrowded emergency state.

## Design

A qualitative approach with symbolic interactionism was used to allow participants to express their own individual experience. Data collection was undertaken by semi-structured interviews was used to collect data between May and November, 2014 in a tertiary hospital in Taiwan. Purposeful sampling was performed and forty nurses were recruited as saturation of data reached. The interview data were analyzed by adopting grounded theory approach, including open, axial and selective coding. The credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were carried out to ensure the trustworthiness throughout the data collection and analysis process.

## Relevance to clinical practice

The results informed that emergency nurses' perceptions of working in an overcrowding situation. Consequently, three strategies are recommended to support emergency nurses facing the overcrowded state, including using a bed –transferring manager position, considering to modify current government health insurance policy; and decreasing the nurses-clients ratio .