

Title:

Nurse Educators' Experience of Compassion Fatigue

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Session Title:

Nurse Faculty Burnout

Slot:

F 18: Monday, 30 October 2017: 9:30 AM-10:15 AM

Scheduled Time:

9:30 AM

Keywords:

Compassion fatigue, Faculty shortage and Nurse educators

References:

Michalec, B., Diefenbeck, C., & Mahoney, M. (2013). The calm before the storm? Burnout and compassion fatigue among undergraduate nursing students. *Nurse Education Today* 33; 314-320. doi: 10.1016/j.nedt.2013.01.026

Winch, S., Henderson, A., & Jones, J. (2015). Recognizing the dialectic of compassionate care in the workplace: Feedback from nurse educators. *Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 46(5), 228.

Abstract Summary:

Little is known about the nurse educator's experience of compassion fatigue. The present study examined the relationships among compassion fatigue, workplace environment and various demographic variables. These relationships as well as suggestions for future study will be examined.

Learning Activity:

| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE |
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| Examine the nurse educator's experience of compassion fatigue in relation to perception of workplace environment. | I. Define compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress in relationship to nurse faculty; II. Review of data analysis; III. Examine statistical relationships identified |
| Analyze the role of acknowledging and mitigating compassion fatigue among nurse educators in order to address potential nurse faculty shortages. | I. Current trends of nurse faculty employment patterns; II, Discussion of methods to address the experience of faculty compassion fatigue; III. Examination of national trends. |

Abstract Text:

Academia can be a stressful work environment for nursing faculty. Not only do faculty need to meet the needs of students, but they must also balance the ongoing demands of their workplaces, credentialing bodies, clinical competence, scholarship, and a host of other challenges. Nurse educators are on the front lines of addressing student issues and as such are at risk for experiencing compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue is a multi-faceted problem encompassing one's levels of compassion satisfaction, burnout and the experience of secondary traumatic stress. As professionals who work directly with others,

especially others in vulnerable positions, such as students, nurse faculty are at an increased risk to experience compassion fatigue (Winch, Henderson, & Jones, 2015). While compassion fatigue has been examined in nursing students as well as various sub-specialties in nursing (Michalec, Diefenbeck, & Mahoney, 2013), there is a paucity of research regarding nurse educators' experience of compassion fatigue. In the present study, nursing faculty were surveyed to determine their experiences of compassion fatigue, using the Pro-QOL tool (Stamm, 2010). Further, the Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire was used to correlate faculty experience of compassion fatigue with perception of work environment. Finally, demographic variables such as tenure status, academic rank, age, and others were examined for effect on compassion fatigue and perception of work environment. Using both email surveys and social media tools, nurse faculty from ten states were surveyed (n=283). Findings demonstrated various relationships between compassion fatigue and work place perceptions, as well among different demographic variables. Specific relationships identified will be discussed.

As has been identified by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) 2015 Nurse Faculty Shortage Fact Sheet, the average age of an associate professor of nursing is 57.6 years old. Along with an aging faculty, AACN (2015) identified the potential for a significant number of faculty retirements in the next ten years. Without sufficient attention to the work environment and experience of compassion fatigue and burnout among nurse faculty, the nurse faculty shortage may be worsened. The current study provides a foundation for further study in the areas of faculty compassion fatigue and work place environment. In order to prepare the nurses of the future, we must recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty. Thus, efforts to acknowledge and mitigate the experience of compassion fatigue among faculty must be continued.