ASSIGNMENTS MATTER

- Nurse-patient assignments are made millions of times a day in hospitals around the world.
- These assignments affect patients, nurses and organizations alike (Lang, Hodge, Olson, Romano, & Kravit, 2004).
- Although made every day little formalized knowledge exists about the process (Allen, 2012).
- The lack of formalized training related to making nurse-patient assignments was the impetus for this research.

PURPOSE
The aims of this descriptive study were to learn who makes nurse-patient assignments, how they learn to make them and if satisfaction with their assignment affects absenteeism and turnover.

PRIMARY FINDINGS

- Three research questions were:
  1. What percentage of a sample of registered nurse has ever made nurse-patient assignments? (91%)
  2. How do registered nurses learn to make nurse-patient assignments?
     - Primary Undergraduate Program – 6%
     - Formal Hospital Training – 9%
     - Colleague – 76%
     - On Their Own – 43%
  3. Is nurse satisfaction with assignments related to absenteeism and turnover? (No correlation found)

THE NURSES (96% female (n=55))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years (n=54)</th>
<th>Average: 45 (24-62)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years a nurse (n=58)</td>
<td>17 (1-40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years worked in inpatient setting (n=58)</td>
<td>16 (1-40)</td>
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</tbody>
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IMPLICATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

- Include the nurse-patient assignment process in prelicensure nursing programs.
- Formalized hospital training on nurse-patient assignments.
- Explore link between nurse-patient assignments and job satisfaction with a larger sample.

REFERENCES