



NAVIGATING CHALLENGES: STRATEGIES FOR RESILIENCE IN NURSING

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Abstract

It takes a lot of time, energy, and resources to onboard newly graduated registered nurses (RNs) in specialized nursing settings like the perioperative environment. In the past, a lot of employers prioritized nursing recruitment. Retaining new staff has become a focus in recent years due to the rising expenses associated with hiring and onboarding nurses. There are numerous obstacles faced by recent nursing graduates as they go from an academic to a practice setting. Many people still struggle with reality shock, cognitive dissonance, and theory-practice gaps at the less-than-ideal time of transition from student to work. Finding the tactics new nurses need to take care of and stand up for themselves in their first year of practice is the goal of this research.

Keywords: challenges, strategies, resilience, nurses.

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DOI: 10.53555/ecb/2022.11.5.089

Introduction

It takes a lot of time, energy, and resources to onboard newly graduated registered nurses (RNs) in specialized nursing settings like the perioperative environment. In the past, a lot of employers prioritized nursing recruitment. Retaining new staff has become a focus in recent years due to the rising expenses associated with hiring and onboarding nurses. Researchers clarify that the high-stress work environment, poor orientation, high patient acuity, and lack of support from co-workers are the reasons for the challenges in keeping recently hired perioperative nurses. These problems could set off a chain reaction that includes low morale, unhappiness at work, more mistakes, more attrition, and trouble finding competent nurses (Rush et al., 2014).

A change in the orientation process is one of the ways that efforts to help new nurses are being made in response to workforce needs. The shift from nursing school to the working world is frequently accompanied by anticipation, enthusiasm, and regrettably, disillusionment. It is well known that the hectic nature of the healthcare industry precludes the kind and supportive environment that newly graduated nurses seek. Instead, the newly graduated nurse frequently experiences feelings of humiliation, incompetence, and unwantedness. A lot of inexperienced nurses will look for job elsewhere or decide to quit because of stress at work and dissatisfaction with their chosen field (Laschinger et al., 2016).

According to a recent poll of 1,653 recently certified nurses, roughly 26% of them quit their first jobs within the first two years, and 43% did so within the first three. Although attrition rates have

decreased over the previous ten years, there is still cause for concern given the persistent nursing shortage and the high number of nurses approaching retirement. Rather of focusing on the reasons why some RNs quit, Stephens started examining the idea of resilience in order to pinpoint the traits and actions of those who made the decision to remain in their position in the face of seeming difficulty. This investigation resulted in part from a desire to redirect nurse retention research efforts toward encouraging positive behaviours that improve the capacity of nurses to manage and overcome hardship. This emphasis does not lessen the necessity of ongoing initiatives to get rid of rudeness, poisonous workplace cultures, and other issues that lead to employee attrition (Stephens et al., 2017).

Stephens' investigation aimed to determine whether a stronger emphasis on personal resilience will eventually result in a more salubrious workplace and happier, healthier nurses. In order to address the phase that new graduate nurses frequently view as stressful—the transition into their professional roles—Stephens developed the Stephens Model of Nursing Student Resilience (Figure 1). This model aims to illustrate the key elements that contribute to resilience development or enhancement. Stephens created the RN Personal Resilience Enhancement Plan (PREP), an onboarding program that promotes self-reflection and the development of a strategic plan for new nurses to demonstrate their resilience, based on this paradigm. This training can be integrated into current onboarding procedures to assist recently graduated nurses in facing the obstacles of making the shift to a professional setting with confidence (Stephens, 2013).

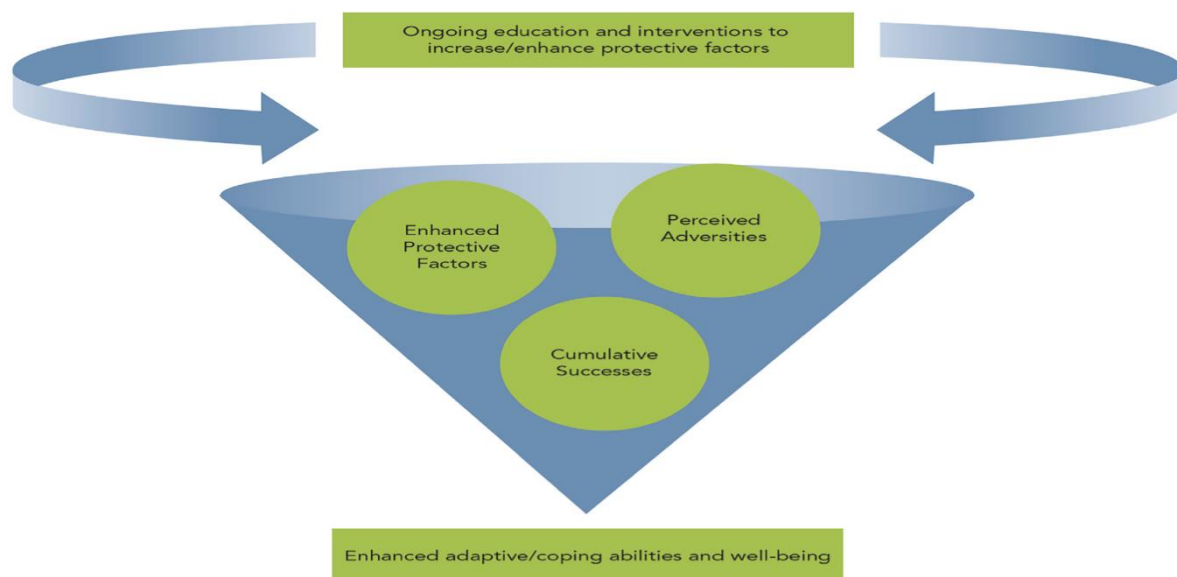


Figure 1. The Stephens Model of Nursing Student Resilience. Adapted from Stephens TM. Nursing student resilience (Stephens et al., 2017).

Aim of study

This study aimed to identify the strategies that registered nurses require to care and advocate for themselves during their first year of practice.

Literature Review

There are numerous obstacles faced by recent nursing graduates as they go from an academic to a practice setting. The phase of transition from student to work is not ideal for many people; they continue to experience theory-practice gaps, reality shock, and cognitive dissonance (Stephens et al., 2017).

In this intense environment, it might be difficult for recently graduated registered nurses (NGRNs) to fit in resource-constrained, and complex environment. Research to date indicates that helping undergraduate nursing students adjust to this reality can help. It is still very likely that NGRNs will work in an environment that is chaotic, dysfunctional, or unsupportive, despite several reports and suggestions to the contrary. In addition to fear, low self-esteem, despair, and a sense of futility, the NGRN frequently feels physically and emotionally exhausted while trying to "fit in" to the new health unit setting. This stress causes a lot of nurses to end their professions. The following are the most frequently mentioned reasons why new graduate nurse practitioners (NGRNs) leave their first positions as registered nurses: stress related to the acuity of clients, unsatisfactory patient/nurse ratios, and the perception that patient care was unsafe; role stress and oppression; lack of management support and excessive responsibility; shift work, overtime, and night shift interference with family life; senior staff not realizing the need for support; and promises such as a preceptorship not materializing, preceptorship being inadequate. As the examples above show, the health-care

environment's role in NGRN transition has drawn a lot of attention. Nonetheless, there hasn't been much conversation on how the academic setting and best practices can help with reality shock and the need for self-care. It is envisaged that curricula can be established to provide the necessary information and resources by identifying the self-care practices used by successful NGRNs and investigating the factors that impact their ability to successfully manage their transition year (Mellor et al., 2017).

Self-Care

The state of nurses' health has an effect on the care that patients receive in healthcare settings today, both within and outside of hospitals. Nursing burnout, melancholy, poor physical and mental health, weight gain, unhealthy eating habits, back problems, moral relativism, and job dissatisfaction have all been extensively studied. However, there hasn't been much attention paid to nurses' self-care. The purpose of this essay is to discuss the need of self-care for nurses, who typically work in stressful settings. Nurses need to be happy in their positions in order to maintain a healthy work-life balance and be inspired to come to work. Evidence-based therapies that can be employed in the workplace or independently can enhance a nurse's quality of life. Researchers advise no more than forty hours of labour per week in a clinical setting, working at a specific time of day without shifts, exercising, expressing thoughts, joining a support group, and creating a sanctuary inside the clinical setting. Cooking wholesome meals before working a shift, getting adequate sleep, participating in cognitive behavioural therapy, attending mindfulness training, and employing stress management techniques are some of the individual tactics for improving their health (Williams et al., 2022).



Figure 2. Setting Self-Care as a Priority: Strategies for Nurses to Keep a Healthy Work-Life Balance (Group, 2023).

Seek Support

Newly graduated nurses frequently lack confidence in their own skills and background. This lack of assurance shows up as behaviours like questioning their performance, feeling uncomfortable and afraid about their ethics, and having trouble communicating with patients, doctors, and other nurses. They also worry about joining a team and gaining acceptance there. During the first several months of employment, they frequently feel qualified, inadequate, and powerless. Furthermore, newly graduated nurses may feel a wide range of emotions, such as anxiety, dread, depression, emotional exhaustion, helplessness, an overwhelming sense of time pressure, and despair. Because of these fears and a sense of helplessness over their environment, they require a great deal of emotional support (Ebrahim et al., 2016).

If they are unable to get the proper support, these problems may cause people to resign from their jobs. During this time, the new graduate looks primarily to effective clinicians and people they see as accepting for emotional support. Researchers have found that emotional support is essential for newly graduating nurses because it improves professional competence, reduces occupational stress, and increases motivation, self-confidence, and job happiness. Furthermore, it fortifies their

commitment to the company, raising the possibility that they will remain in their role and carry on working even in trying circumstances (Ebrahim et al., 2016).

Embrace Mindfulness and Stress-Reduction Techniques

The goal of preventing burnout in nurses is to support their personal wellbeing and help them develop coping strategies for dealing with work-related stress (Kravitz et al., 2010). Holistic therapies, such as mindfulness meditation, may be very useful in this regard. Mindfulness Meditation is characterized as a contemplative or reflective activity. It has long been associated with Buddhism, which seeks insight by increasing consciousness and cultivating compassion. There are numerous subtypes of meditation, and each has its own practices, traditions, and guidelines. The Pali term for "special seeing" or "insight," *vipassanā*, was first practiced in Burma in the 1950s. The idea of mindfulness, which entails paying attention to the current moment and contemplating the nature of reality, is closely linked to meditation. It is sometimes referred to as "mindfulness meditation" because of this connection." (Green & Kinchen, 2021).

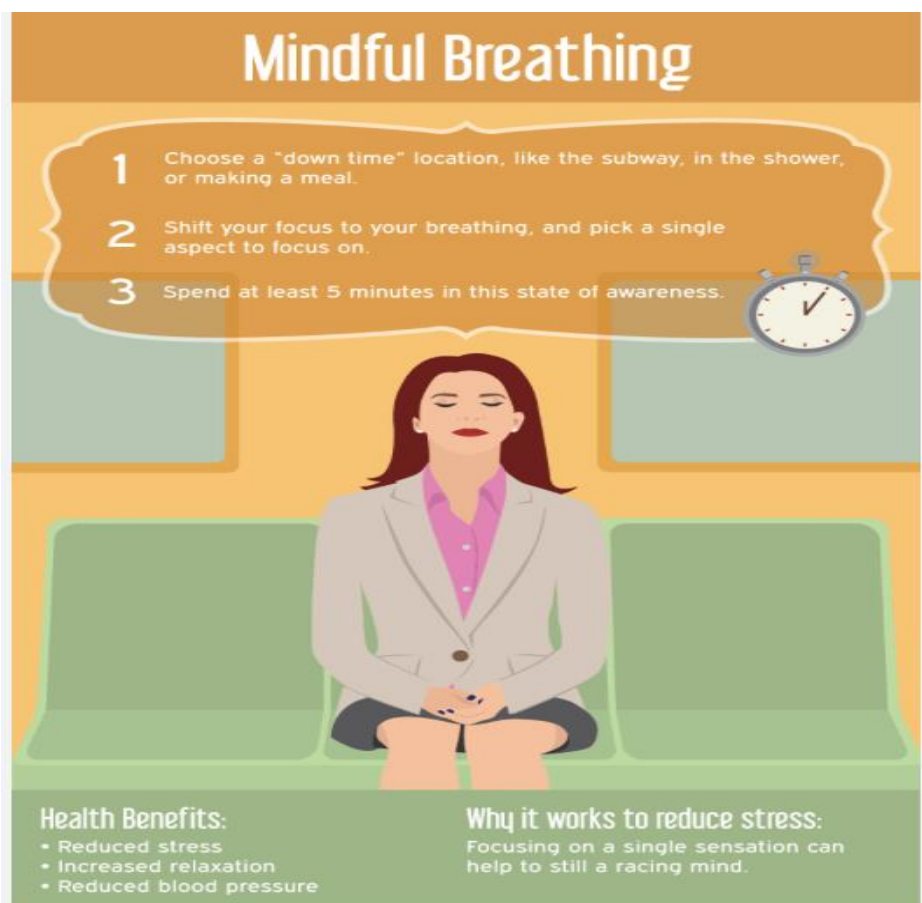


Figure 3. mindful breathing exercises (Gelinas, 2024).

Empowering Education

Nurses have a critical role in improving health standards. As a result, they need to be up to date on both theoretical and practical knowledge in this field. In fact, in-service training improves an employee's capacity to perform a range of tasks and responsibilities as effectively as possible while keeping them up to date on professional and occupational knowledge. Another important component of the nursing staff's in-service training is their active participation in these programs. Active participation in in-service training by nurses can lead to effective learning and growth in the workplace. Using adult learning concepts is one of the things that makes staff members more involved

in these kinds of programs. Adults are self-assessors, aware of learning objectives, and in charge of their own education. Additionally, self-centred learning has been proposed in medical education as a lifelong learning strategy. Despite being implemented in a variety of ways, the nursing staff's in-service training programs have sadly had little effect on their professional outcomes. It's essential to investigate nursing in-service training components and create a simplified model for nursing staff training because of the inadequate knowledge, vague concepts, and undeveloped relationships between concepts (Chaghari et al., 2017).



Figure 4. Six essential components for empowering education (Ahamed & Mesbah, 2019).

Work–life balance/self-care

Achieving self-care and a work-life balance are essential for wellbeing. The split of a person's time between work and family or recreational activities is known as work-life balance. Work-life balance is the idea that work and leisure activities can coexist, but it does not imply that time is spent equally

between them. It can change with time. Self-care is the deliberate practice of safeguarding one's pleasure and well-being. This includes actions that uphold and safeguard one's bodily and emotional health. Self-soothing socializing, mindfulness, and meditation (Cooper et al., 2020).



Figure 5. Work-life balance (Bates, 2021).

Practice Effective Communication

Two of the primary goals of therapeutic communication in the healthcare sector are fostering relationships with patients and their families and creating an environment of empathy, understanding, and compassion. Therapeutic communication between patients and healthcare team members is therefore essential in community and hospital settings to guarantee clarity in the delivery of care, lower medical errors, and increase

patient safety. The World Health Organization acknowledges that patients must be included in the planning and decision-making processes related to their health care. Nurse educators must come up with innovative and effective strategies to incorporate communication skills training into undergraduate and graduate nursing curricula in light of the global ambition to improve healthcare quality and safety (MacLean et al., 2017).



Figure 6. the importance of effective communication in nursing (Mozafaripour, 2023).

Conclusion

In the perioperative setting, the RN PREP could be a helpful supplement to the onboarding procedure. RN PREP goals can be facilitated by nurse leaders and educators by encouraging self-reflection and resilience building. Leaders can show their worth and inspire others to take on a more positive outlook by modelling protective factors. Health care workers must strive tirelessly to remove any conditions that could impede a new nurse's ability to adjust to her new role. It is critical that all nursing colleagues take the time to welcome, support, and foster these individuals as well as acknowledge the importance they contribute to the nursing profession.

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