

# 15<sup>th</sup> Euro Nursing & Medicare Summit

October 17-19, 2016 Rome, Italy

## Is role stress in charge nurses a cross-cultural phenomenon?

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Nursing role stress effects wellbeing, health and increases burnout. It may impact quality and safety of patient care, organizational outcomes, and overall care costs. Reliable and valid stress measurement scales tailored for specific nursing roles are inadequate. Based on Lazarus' relational theoretical framework of stress, we developed a reliable and valid Israeli tool for measuring actual work place stress as perceived by charge nurses (CN) i.e. the charge nurse stress questionnaire (CNSQ). Four stress factors were identified and a shortened version was translated into English and validated. A descriptive methodological study was conducted in Israel, Ohio and Thailand (n=2,616 CNs). Mean stress level of the total sample was moderate. Significant stress level differences were noted: Thai CNs scored the highest and Israeli CNs the lowest stress levels. All stress perceptions were similar (all countries) with responsibility burden and lack of resources being the most stressful. Thai CNs differed from Israelis and Americans in their perception of stressful situations. Demographic, professional and cultural differences partially explain these findings. A mathematical model was offered to predict stress levels of CNs in each country. Educational programs should be mandatory for nurses prior to taking on the CN role, which specifically relate to CN role stress, taking into consideration demographic and professional needs and cultural variations. Ongoing training would help CNs develop leadership abilities and cope with role stress. Future research should use the CNSQ in different cross-cultural settings. Further comparative studies and new tools are needed to evaluate stress perceptions of nurses in other roles.

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