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Experienced pediatric nurses' perceptions of work-related stressors on general medical and surgical units: A qualitative study

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Experienced pediatric nurses caring for increasingly sick and vulnerable children on medical and surgical units may be at particular risk for work-related stress. In view of their positive impact on quality of care, and the fact that they are particularly difficult to retain, it is imperative to understand the work-related stressors, these nurses encounter in order to develop effective organizational interventions to minimize stressors and promote retention. The purpose of the study was to explore experienced pediatric nurses' perceptions of work-related stressors in medical and surgical units. The study was conducted in a quaternary care pediatric hospital in Montreal, Canada. Qualitative descriptive design was chosen with semi-structured interviews. Eligible participants were nurses recognized as experienced by the nursing leadership team as reflected by having been 'in charge' of the unit, or having trained junior staff, and who had been practicing full-time for three years or more on a general medical or surgical pediatric unit. Purposive sampling was used, and nurses recruited until data saturation was reached (n=12). The study findings reveal that nurses describe a strong sense of responsibility for providing excellent patient care, and identify stressor that negatively impacted their ability to do so. Stressors are reflected in three themes: "The kids are getting sicker and sicker": Difficulty ensuring excellent patient care to an increasingly vulnerable population; feeling powerless to provide quality care, and; being a jack-of-all-trades: Struggling with competing demands. In conclusion, experienced pediatric nurses felt powerless to provide quality care to an increasingly acute and vulnerable population. Dealing with multiple and diverse responsibilities, and limited resources and support, were important stressors.

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The lived experiences of people with schizophrenia prescribed atypical antipsychotic medication and the impact on their quality of life

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The question of quality of life of people with schizophrenia has been widely debated. Pinikahana et al., (2002) conducted a review of published studies and found that each of these studies utilized a quality of life (QOL) measurement scale that was either completed by a practitioner or the patients themselves. There are no published studies that have looked specifically at the lived experiences of people with schizophrenia and their quality of life. This study focused on the lived experiences of people with schizophrenia and the use of multiple data collection methods, to develop valid accounts of how patients themselves construct their lives to be meaningful and how medication affects this. 19 people were recruited, and they kept a daily diary for a period of four weeks, documenting their activities, experiences and feelings. They also took part in two individual interviews at the mid and end points of the study. Data were analyzed using the work of Erving Goffman (1990a) and analyzed using Burnard's content analysis (1991) from which five core concepts (social isolation, stigma, confidence, quality of life and social networks) emerged. Participants suffered a loss of identity and control over their lives, and stigma from the public and media continued to play a significant part in influencing their QoL. The study gives a unique and original insight into how a person with schizophrenia lives their life, and that the stigma associated with schizophrenia still has a negative impact on quality of life. People with schizophrenia want and need to be listened to their lived experiences and should be taken into consideration when implementing policy development.

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