

46TH GLOBAL NURSING & HEALTHCARE

October 15-16, 2018 | Las Vegas, USA

Educating emergency medical technicians to reduce stress and burnout

Catherine Pankonien
Midwestern State University, USA

Emergency Medical Technicians provide emergency care and treatment outside of the healthcare setting and encounter highly stressful situations that involve trauma and death. Ineffective skills or inability to cope with this level of stress or ongoing stress can lead to negative consequences for the EMT provider and/or the patients they are serving. Poor coping strategies might include increased substance use or abuse, denial, dark humor, and suppressed emotions (Porter & Johnson, 2008). The authors describe the unresolved grief and increased stress over time, as leading to compassion fatigue and eventual burnout in EMTs. Compassion fatigue is described as a loss of the ability to nurture, while burnout is referred to as emotional and physical exhaustion relating to inadequate coping and adaptive skills (Boyle, 2011; O'Toole, ed., 1997). Subsequently, EMTs miss work and may eventually change work environments to escape the grief and stress (Porter & Johnson, 2008). Cumulative experiences of exposure to death can cause anxiety and trauma for nurses and EMTs, rendering them psychologically unable to support patients and their families (Kain, 2006). Learning about stress, burnout, and coping strategies will decrease burnout tendencies, increase the quality of life, and increase knowledge of healthy coping strategies. With increased employment of healthy coping strategies, burnout rates will decrease responsively over time and patient outcomes will improve.

Biography

Catherine Pankonien is the Graduate Coordinator of MSN programs and is an Assistant Professor at Midwestern State University. For over ten years, she worked as a nurse in Labor & Delivery, and a charge nurse in Neonatal ICU, and Pediatrics. Since earning an MSN in Nursing Education and DNP, her focus has been on improving patient outcomes by utilizing evidence. Evidence-based Practice projects focus on first responders, perinatal nurses, and pregnant women and families. She is passionate about helping students develop a love and passion for the nursing field and the care of their patients. She brings her real-world experience from pediatrics and neonatal care to all the classes and programs at MSU.

catherine.pankonien@mwsu.edu

Notes: