

Quality of the nursing practice environment in a hospital context


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Abstract

Introduction

In health, the evolution of the quality concept was based on the growing concern with the continuous improvement of the quality of nursing care¹. The investment in improving the nursing work environment has as one of the objectives to improve the working conditions of nurses, with impact on the quality of nursing care provided². Over time, several scales were developed to assess the nursing work environment. The Quality Indicators of the Nursing Practice Environment scale³, by de Sousa, Lin, Gaspar & Lucas developed in 2022, has five dimensions, which are: “Team Support and Professional Development”; “Team Organization and Management”; “Safe Nursing Work Environment”; “Information Systems and Risk Control” and “Salary and Welfare”. In this present study, the described scale was applied and all nurses from a Hospital Center were included. The scale considers more recent aspects of the nursing work environment, which have become important in recent years. Thus, due to the importance and relevance of the quality of the nursing work environment at a national level, the application of this scale in a hospital context was considered relevant.

Objective

To assess the quality of the nursing practice environment in a Portuguese public hospital.

Method

This is a descriptive-cross-sectional, observational and quantitative study. The ethical-legal authorizations necessary to carry out this study were obtained, such as approval by the ethics committee and informed consent. Of the 650 questionnaires delivered, 21.8% of nurses responded.

Results

The nurses who participated in the study 78% of nurses are female, with an average age of 39 years, 16 years of average total professional activity and 13 years of average professional activity in the organization. Approximately 66% of nurses are in the Nurse category, 36.2% work in inpatient units, 33.3% in the intensive care unit and 30.5% in other types of services. The nurses who participated in the study considered that the nursing work environment presented an adequate evaluation with an average value of 2.64, with all dimensions with average values of adequate response (Dimension “Team Support and Professional Development”: 2.53; Dimension “Team Organization and Management”: 2.64; Dimension “Safe Nursing Work Environment”: 2.44; Dimension “Information Systems and Risk Control”: 3.04 and Dimension “Salary and Welfare”: 2.57).

Discussion and Conclusions

The quality of the nursing work environment, in general, was considered adequate in this hospital, although nurses consider that there are important aspects to be improved, namely in terms of salary and welfare and team organization and management.

Implications for knowledge development

This study is relevant for the provision of care, nursing management and research, due

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to the relationship that the nursing work environment has with the quality of care, the efficiency of organizations, professional and client satisfaction. This is an innovative study, due to the lack of any scale on quality indicators of the nursing practice environment in Portugal.

Keywords

Indicators; Management; Nursing; Quality of care; Nursing Work Environment.

References

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