

Rural Nurses as a Consistent Resource

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Abstract : Aim: The working environment in rural clinics is often isolated and distant from major health centers. In these circumstances, rural health care faces numerous challenges. The hope is that, in the immediate future and in the medium and long range, the rural nursing staff will realize their full professional and personal potential to their own satisfaction and to the health and welfare of their patients. Background: Rural nurses work mostly alone or with very few colleagues, and have the authority to make professional decisions, a fact which often requires them to make critical decisions in pressure situations. In addition, the expectations set for these nurses are extremely high, a fact which requires them to be extremely skilled and to fulfill their professional potential. They are required to provide high-quality and comprehensive care to the individual, the family, and the community and to maintain close interaction with the community. Work in a rural setting requires the flexibility to perform multiple tasks in an isolated setting, often far removed from major health centers. In order to maintain professional satisfaction for the rural nurse, expanded direction and training are required in professional know-how, and in the development of new and existing skills, toward the goal of treating a diverse population and to obtain a comprehensive view of the components of a diagnosis for treatment and to develop an understanding appropriate to the presented reality. Objective: To provide knowledge and to expand and develop professional skills in the prevention and advancement of health in the care of a diverse patient population. The development of strategies and skills for work under pressure alone instills expertise in performing multiple tasks in diverse disciplines. To reduce feelings of stress and burnout. Methodology: This course is the first and one of a kind in Clalit - the biggest health organisation in Israel. Observing and identifying the needs of the nurses in the field relating to the development of professional and personal skills defining goals and objectives, and determining the content of a course designed for rural nurses and kibbutz nurses who are not Clalit employees. Results: 43 nurses participated and 30 answered the feedback questionnaire. The rating of their experience was 4.33 (on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest ranking). 92% indicated the importance of meeting with additional nurses to teach their colleagues. 83% of the nurses indicated an increased sense of organizational belonging. 60% indicated that the course helped to reduce feelings of stress and burnout in becoming a better rural nurse. 80% indicated that the course helped them establish intra-organizational professional cooperation and initiating processes. Conclusion: The course is an instrument which aids in increasing the feeling of organizational belonging, reducing feelings of stress and burnout, creation of relationships and cooperation both within and outside of the organization, increased the realization of the potential of the village nurse.

Keywords : rural nurse, alone, burnout, multiple tasks

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