

Assignment on Enhancing Professional Healthcare Practice

Incidence of Post Traumatic Stress in Nurses while facing traumatic incidents in the workplace

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Topic: Incidence of Post Traumatic Stress in Nurses while facing traumatic incidents in the workplace

Background

Post-traumatic stress is a psychiatric disorder that causes anxiety and stress in an individual. The essay will be focused on the factors causing post-traumatic stress disorder in nurses and the impact on their mental health due to PTSD will be discussed in detail. The stress coping strategy will be discussed as the solution to PTSD in nurses. The incidence of traumatic stress among nurses is very high as they are directly in contact with the patients while providing them with medical and emotional support (Wolf et al., 2020). The nurses have developed traumatic stress disorder while treating patients for traumatic incidents such as severe accident cases, cancer patients, and end-of-life care patients. The unstable mental imbalance can also be defined as post-traumatic stress due to dreadful incidents.

The incidence of post-traumatic stress in nurses in critical care happens due to neglect and delay in the care provision to the patients. An example can be taken from cardiopulmonary resuscitations and witnessing the death of patients having acute disorders. The nurses also faced post-traumatic stress while providing first aid in World War I and World War II (Fink & Milbrath, 2022). Post-traumatic stress has affected their ability to speak, numb thinking, uncontrolled crying and memory loss. They were unable to move by seeing deathly events in front of their eyes. The episodes of anxiety that cause PTSD in nurses due to direct and indirect contact with traumatic events is more than a month.

Post-traumatic stress causes physical and mental dysregulation in nurses. They are directly involved in deriving emotional support for the patient's family. Unexpected incidents like the death of patients can affect

their cognitive ability to focus on their task. They also lose concentration and develop compassion fatigue. In nurses, mental health is highly affected by post-traumatic disorder. There are the following symptoms that indicate PTSD in nurses including a reoccurrence of traumatic incidents, reexperiencing, avoiding critically ill patients, fluctuation of mood and cognitive abilities and changes in reactive functioning and arousals (Thakur et al., 2021). Post-traumatic stress in nurses can affect their performance in providing quality care to the patient. The traumatic stress can affect their ability to concentrate on the care coordinate methods and can cause mishandling and caring errors. The sentinel event, unexpected physical stress, and psychological harm can be caused due to PTSD in nurses.

In the United Kingdom, three out of ten nurses have developed post-traumatic stress disorder. 30% of the nurses are diagnosed with high rates of PTSD criteria. The rate of prevalence of traumatic stress is 20% higher in nurses than in the general population as they are exposed to horrifying situations, and experience emotional exhaustion, workplace bullying, mental fatigue and workload burnout. Post-traumatic stress can cause physical as well as psychological diseases in nurses including disturbed sleep and awake cycle, depression, metabolic disorder, hypertension, insomnia, etc.

Literature review

Effect of traumatic and critical incidents on nurses

The literature review will be focused on highlighting the effect of traumatic and critical incidents on nurses. The nurses have direct and indirect contact with the traumatic incidents that happened in the hospitals. The research will also highlight the support from the healthcare system in designing coping strategies to reduce the symptoms of traumatic stress disorder in nurses and midwives. The coping strategy requires moving on from the critical incident. The qualitative analysis will be conducted using

literature from different journals including Medline, Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO, PubMed Nursing and Allied Health Studies ProQuest. The articles selected for the literature review were written in English language. The articles were filtered following the PRISMA review guidelines. The methodological qualitative analysis was conducted using the Joanna Briggs Institute-based critical appraisal skill checklist qualitative analysis (Buhlmann et al., 2021). The results have shown that 7620 articles were selected and filtered based on the exclusion and inclusion criteria. The 180 articles were best fitted based on the critical appraisal skills program model. The article has shown that nurses find it difficult to move on from complex situations and critical incidents that happen in their workplace. These incidents can be the death of the patient, unexpected care errors, delay in the treatment, workplace bullying and working fatigue. They had long long-lasting impressions of the critical incidents on their mind that caused difficulty in moving on to normal routine functioning. The research concluded that nurses find it hard to cope with the critical and traumatic events happening in hospitals (Omran & Browning Callis, 2021). The incidents can cause a high rate of post-traumatic stress disorder in nurses. The healthcare system is required to focus on designing the aftermath and coping strategies to handle post-traumatic stress in nurses. The healthcare system should include designing coping practices for nurses to enhance their professional confidence while treating patients.

Post-traumatic stress disorder and moral injury

Post-traumatic stress disorder and moral injury have been called the nurses' most prevalent disorders. The nurses are the highest victims of post-traumatic disorder and moral injuries in providing safe care to the patients. The nurses face moral injury symptoms including guilt, stress, depression, fear and shame. Post-traumatic stress has different secondary symptoms that are faced by nurses including moral injuries, anxiety, anger, self-harm,

suicidal thoughts and depression (Stovall et al., 2020). The literature review was conducted using the SALSA method which includes search, appraisal, synthesis and analysis methods. The articles were selected from the timeline of 2013 to 2019. The result indicated that patient safety incidents are associated with causing moral injuries to the nurses. Moral injuries also increase the rate of post-traumatic stress disorder in nurses.

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