

Compassion Fatigue: An Education Intervention Program for Trauma Nurses

Hunter Nicholas

Touro University Nevada

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Nursing Practice

DNP Project Chair: Dr. Judith Carrion

DNP Project Member(s): Dr. Nadia Luna

Date of Submission: June 7th, 2017

Abstract

With the increasing demands of health care on nurses, nurse leaders should focus on ensuring that providers have the resources needed for self-care. Compassion fatigue was identified as a problem at the practice site. The quality improvement project aimed to provide the development and implementation of a policy driven initiative for trauma nurses regarding education on recognizing, preventing, and identifying methods of coping with compassion fatigue.

Participants completed a demographic form, pre-questionnaire over compassion fatigue, and a ProQOL scale prior to the education intervention. Four weeks after the education intervention, the participants completed a post-questionnaire and a ProQOL scale to measure the differences. The pre-questionnaire results showed that trauma nursing participants all had average to high compassion levels. None of the questionnaires indicated high levels of burnout or secondary traumatic stress. 33.3% of participants' questionnaires demonstrated average burnout and 22% with average secondary traumatic stress. Four weeks after the education intervention, post-questionnaires were completed and analyzed. Two questionnaires from participants had a change in a subscale category demonstrated by a decrease from high compassion satisfaction to average and an increase from low burnout to average burnout. Such a quality improvement project places emphasis on training programs that may have a positive impact on the personal and professional lives of nursing staff. The goal of such programs is aimed at improving the well-being of nurses and promoting high quality patient care.

Keywords: compassion fatigue in nursing, burnout, secondary stress syndrome, education for compassion fatigue, interventions for compassion fatigue

References

- Adams, R.E., Boscarino, J.A., & Figley, C.R. (2006). Compassion fatigue and psychological distress among social workers: A validation study. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(1), 103–108. doi:10.1037/0002-9432.76.1.103.
- Finzi-Dottan, R., & Kormosh, M.B. (2016). Social workers in Israel: Compassion, fatigue, and spill over in married life. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 42(5), 703–717. doi:10.1080/01488376.2016.1147515.
- Schroeter, K. (2014). Compassion fatigue: An unwanted reflection of your reality. *Journal of Trauma Nursing*, 21(2), 38–39. doi:10.1097/JTN.0000000000000003.
- Wentzel, D., & Brysiewicz, P. (2014). The consequence of caring too much: Compassion fatigue and the trauma nurse. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*, 40(1), 95-97. doi:10.1016/j.jen.2013.10.009.