The association of the psychosocial work environment with care workers’ health in Swiss nursing homes

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# Agenda

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A healthy workplace: definition

“(…) provides all members of the workforce with physical, psychological, social and organizational conditions that protect and promote health (…)”

(WHO, Burton 2010)
Background: healthcare a high risk industry

• Health care setting is a high-risk industry

• It is ranking after construction and trucking in work-related health problems

(Eurofound, 2012; Trinkoff, 2005)
Where do we stand?

<table>
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<th>Country</th>
<th>*Rate (year)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>5.0 (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.4 (2102)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>3.1 (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>4.8 (2013)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Australia</td>
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* Injuries per 100 Full Time Equivalent

(EU for Safety & Health at Work, 2014; Eurostat, 2010; BLS, 2013)
Work-related health problems

1. Physical health
   - Musculoskeletal pain & injuries
   - Needle stick injuries
   - Skin diseases

1. Mental health problems
   - Emotional exhaustion & burnout

(Alamgir, 2008; Miller, 2006; Trinkoff, 2005; Hasselhorn, 2008; Smith, 2002; Piko, 2006)
Nursing Homes: An overview

• Important sector of the care system

• Current issues in nursing –CH homes
  • DRG
  • sub-acute care
  • Dementia symptoms

→ Care workers perform strenuous activities

(Widmer, 2013)
Gap in the literature.

- *Nursing home* care workers` *health* is not well examined
WHO Health Workplace Model

(Burton, 2010)
Work environment measures.

- Leadership
- Staffing adequacy

- Work stressors:
  - Workloads
  - Conflicts & lack of recognition
  - Lack of preparation

- Workplace violence

- Collaboration with colleagues & nursing director
- Autonomy at work
Study Aims.

1. Explore the prevalence of physical and mental health outcomes among care workers in Swiss nursing homes.

2. Explore the association between selected factors in the psychosocial work environment and health outcomes of care workers.
Methods.

• Current study:
  • n=3,471
  • direct bed side care workers
The study results.
Prevalence of self-reported Physical Health
n=3,471

- Needle stick injuries: 2%
- Allergies: 1%
- Backpain: 19%
- Joint pain: 14%

Association of care workers' health and work environment, Dhaini S. et al., 03.02.2016
Prevalence of self-reported Mental Health
n=3,471

% 25

24

13

14

10

0 5 10 15 20 25

Sleeplessness Tiredness Headache Emotional Exhaustion

Association of care workers’ health and work environment, Dhaini S. et al., 03.02.2016
Percentage of care workers with at least 1 health outcome
n=3,471
Work environment & Physical health

**Work stressors**
- Workload
- Lack of job preparation
- Conflict & lack of recognition

**Staffing adequacy**
- Verbal aggression

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**Back pain**

**Joint pain**

**Needle stick & Allergies**

*Association of care workers’ health and work environment, Dhaini S. et al., 03.02.2016*
Work environment & Mental health

**Work stressors**
- Workload
- Conflict & lack of recognition

**Staffing adequacy**
- Autonomy

Association of care workers’ health and work environment, Dhaini S. et al., 03.02.2016
Work environment & Mental health (cont`d)

**Work stressors**
- Workload
- Conflict & lack of recognition

**Collaboration with nursing director**

**Headache**

**Leadership**

**Work stressors**
- Workload
- Lack of job preparation
- Conflict & lack of recognition

**Emotional Exhaustion**
Summary.

- Physical & mental health are of concern
- Perceived *work stressors* are associated with physical & mental health
Implications for practice.

• Why taking care of the work environment and the nursing staff?
  • Ethical
  • Legal
  • Business case

→ Modeling of work environment aspects may improve care workers health
References.


Thank you!

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