

# Effects of long working hours on nurse performance

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Effects of Long Working Hours on Nurse Performance Chamberlain College of Nursing Number: Term and Year: Effects of Long Working Hours on Nurse Performance Nurses face various ethical issues that hinder their efficiency in the provision of medical care to their patients throughout the entire world. For example, they are bound to encounter stress when faced by uncertainties in the cause of performing their duties (Ulrich et al, 2010). Nurses meet patients with different problems, which range from highly complicated illnesses to minor ailments. This implies they operate without maintaining the required ethical standards when their problems are not resolved. These circumstances hinder their everyday operations and reduce their integrity levels because of their problems. Since there is no central measure of determining the number of inpatients and outpatients that come into a hospital, nurses may often have to work for long and extended hours (Rogers, 2006). This makes them subject to be fatigued, which undermines their efficiency in providing efficient healthcare to their patients. Key Strategies Pertinent To Long and Extended Working Hours Several strategies should be applied to ensure that the stress nurses encounter in the performance of their duties is reduced. These measures will ensure that the nurses' efficiency along with their effectiveness is not hampered. The number of nurses working for a hospital or organization providing medical care should always be adequate. This will help the hospitals in ensuring their patients get the appropriate attention while not overworking their nurses (Rogers, 2006). The management of the organizations providing medical care should ensure that nurses work in shifts to reduce the effects of fatigue and stress on their performance. They should schedule the workers while

considering their various attributes so as to assign duties appropriately. These attributes include issues such as their work experiences, age, gender, professional qualifications and the type of practice they are best suited for working. Additionally, the management of the health care provider should encourage open forums for the nurses to air their problems. These measures ensure that the nurses' efficiency is improved while they stick to the required ethical standards in the profession. Medicare providers working on 24 hr basis receive patients all the time, which implies that there should be nurses always on standby to take care of them. Research previously carried out shows that a 7-8 hour shift is good enough for nurses since they will be able to deliver care to the patients effectively (Josten, Julie and Thierry, 2003). Adoption of various types of scales used to measure stress in individuals because of their work should be adopted by the management. These scales will greatly advance the management's ability of ascertaining what affects their nurses' performances when attending their patients. An example of such a scale is the scale developed by Raines, which gives the effects of several causes of stress and suggests ways of countering them. Offering regular and annual leaves for the nurses should be adopted to ease the stresses nurses encounter in the performance of their duties (Ulrich et al, 2010). The nurses should also be properly remunerated to ensure that they are not tempted into indulging in corrupt activities. This should include paying for the extra hours that an individual would be willing to work. Finally, the management of the medical care providers involved in hiring nurses should provide refresher courses, seminars and conferences. Such a move will ensure their nurses are equipped with additional and beneficial

information on ethical issues that will assist in improving their performances. Finally, nurses working in restraining environments will not adequately meet their required ethical standards. To counter these effects the management should provide them with all their required resources, and this will greatly assist in reducing their stress levels (Josten, Julie and Thierry, 2003).

**Importance of Sleep for Nurses** It is important that nurses have enough time to rest since it improves their efficiency along with effectiveness in their provision of quality health care. Working for long and extended hours without having shifts in between their duties causes fatigue because of insomnia. Previously done research shows that the lack of sleep has undesirable effects on the cognition, performance and frame of mind of the nurses. This undermines their productivity levels since they have to be composed in their provision of medical care to their patients. Leaders in the healthcare industry should always ensure that they staff their facilities sufficiently with nurses and ascertain they spread out the shifts efficiently (Ulrich et al, 2010). This greatly assists in the elimination of fatigue on nurses who work for long hours hence improving their provision of services. This in turn increases the facilities profitability and credibility among their patients since they provide high quality medical care for them.

**Conclusion** The nursing profession requires composure since the job is stressing. This is mainly because nurses have to deal with patients who have diverse problems all day and night. This undermines their efficiencies along with effectiveness of providing medical attention. It is recommended that a normal working person should get at least 7 hours of sleep so that they can be productive in their duties. This should also be the case with nurses, as

they will deliver quality healthcare to their patients effectively and efficiently while maintaining the required ethical values. References Josten, E., Julie, E. and Thierry, H. (2003). The Effects of Extended Workdays on Fatigue, Health, Performance and Satisfaction in Nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 44(6), 643-652. Rogers, A. (2006). The Effects of Fatigue and Sleepiness on Nurse Performance and Patient Safety. *Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses*. Ulrich, C., Taylor, C., Soeken, K., O'Donnell, P., Farrar, A., Danis, M., and Grady, C. (2010). Everyday Ethics: Ethical Issues and Stress in Nursing Practice. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 66(11), 2510-2519.