



## The strategy of a multisite hospital to counter risks of nursing staff shortage

Poster (Practice-related)

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**Background:** This multisite hospital represents the public health structures of the Canton and has about 1000 beds and about 4000 employees (650 physicians and 2140 medical-technical staff). Having an adequate number of Health Care Professionals is therefore essential.

**Problem:** The Canton trains a lot of nurses but the number is even not enough to reach the number of health professionals needed. To work against this difficulty, there are still two different nursing educations (diploma and bachelor) and the recruitment of professionals from other countries. The risk of a shortage of qualified health workers remains significant.

**Objectives:** To counter this risk the nursing department aims to increase staff satisfaction in the following ways: 1. To enhance and increase working time in direct contact with patients by promoting relationship-based care (CRB) and adapting different organizational aspects. 2. To schedule the professional career of nurses and support their professional motivation 3. To promote the professional image of nurses also among the resident population.

**Approach:** A systemic approach with various interventions was adopted. The interventions include organizational aspects of the problem and strictly professional ones. In defining this strategy, the continuous involvement of nurses and their context were significant.

**Results/Experiences:** Interventions: 1. To enhance and increase working time in direct contact with patients by fostering a culture based on CRBs and changing various organizational aspects. a. Gradual insertion of the "Primary Nursing" model in each department to facilitate and intensify the relationship between nurse and patient. Introduction of CBR culture. b. Introduction of administrative assistants, to remove improper administrative activity from nurses. c. To monitor nursing workloads with a specific methodology (LEP). d. The professional documentation was first standardized on paper and then computerized. The computerization process has been adapted to the needs of nurses and made more streamlined and functional. e. A strong partnership with nursing schools is held (700 students on stage every year). 2. A career path has been defined for nurses on several levels, based on their training and years of experience. To support their professional motivation the courses "re-ignition the Spirit of care" have been activated. Specialization and training of clinical nurse specialists to improve and standardize clinical practice in the various departments has been facilitated. 3. An open public advertising campaign was implemented based on photos and words of nurses working at the EOC.

**Discussion:** The literature has already demonstrated the consequences of the shortage of health care workers. We speak about burn out, moral distress or dissatisfaction. The implicit rationing of treatments is directly connected with morbidity and mortality. The actions of the Nursing Department have been effective so far, as the shortage of nurses, has been very limited until now.



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**Conclusion:** The shortages of health workers is a latent risk for many health care facilities and could become worse in the future, due to economic reasons. To counteract these risks, our experience has shown that it is important to have a systemic and multiple approach to this problem.