The Discrepancy in Safety Culture Perceptions between Staff Nurses and Nurse Leaders in Medical-Surgical Units

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Background

- Organization culture remains a significant barrier to safer patient care
- Nurses consistently have the least favorable perception (63%) of safety culture and administrators have the most favorable perception (77%) favorable

Safety Culture

The product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behavior that can determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of an organization’s health and safety management system

Results

A purposive sample of:
- Staff Nurses (n = 16)
- Nurse Leaders (n = 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Nurse Themes</th>
<th>Shared Language Categories</th>
<th>Nurse Leader Themes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time to “know my patient to keep them safe”</td>
<td>Relationships with Patients</td>
<td>Making sure staff nurses are keeping patients safe</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Using my gut” and nursing interventions</td>
<td>Nursing Interventions</td>
<td>Making sure staff nurses have nursing interventions in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Extra eyes on the patient”</td>
<td>Relationships with Colleagues</td>
<td>“I expect staff nurses to stop things or escalate when they feel uncomfortable”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not always having what is needed to provide safe care</td>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Making sure staff nurses have what they need to provide safe care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization prioritizes patient safety</td>
<td>Organization Priorities</td>
<td>Making sure staff nurses have what they need to provide safe care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: “Have our Backs”</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Organization prioritizes patient safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Safety Culture

Figure 1. Safety Culture

Psychological Aspects
- How People Feel

Behavioral Aspects
- What People Do

Situational Aspects
- What the Organization Has

Purpose

- Understand, explore and describe safety culture as experienced by staff nurses (registered nurses) and nurse leaders within the situational context of medical-surgical units in a hospital.
- Compare and contrast staff nurses’ and nurse leaders’ safety culture experiences.

Method

- Inductive Qualitative Descriptive

Implications for Research and Practice

- Organizations must understand and support the staff nurse and nurse leader making sure process to serve as the foundation for safe nursing practice
- Organizations must set expectations and accountability for safety-first behaviors
- Relationships between all members of the healthcare team must be further studied and improved
- Evidence to support a paradigm shift in the role of the staff nurse and nurse leader is warranted

Conclusion

- Staff nurses and nurse leaders experience barriers daily to making sure patients are safe
- Relationships are foundational to safe patient care
- Organizations must understand the psychological, behavioral, and situational aspects influencing a safety culture to realize safer patient care

References