

FUTURE OF NURSING WEST VIRGINIA

Future of Nursing West Virginia Action Coalition Bedside Nurse Retention Study

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Abstract

Background: Registered nursing (RN) is one of the fastest-growing occupations in the United States. However, roughly 40% of new graduate RNs wish to leave nursing within one year, highlighting the need for retention efforts in health care organizations (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2020).

Purpose: This descriptive qualitative study aimed to explore the factors essential to maintaining a highly qualified RN at the bedside.

Sample: Study inclusion criteria were (a) entry-level registered nurse licensed in the state of WV, (b) currently employed in a health care organization in WV, (c) and five years or more experience at the bedside on the same nursing unit with the state of WV. Twenty-two participants completed the study.

Methodology: The study was conducted via email. Once informed consent was obtained, a semi-structured interview guide was emailed to the participant. Member-checking occurred during the interview. Data analysis was completed using In Vivo coding and thematic analysis via Quirkos.

Results: The study discovered the themes of compensation, leadership (positive factors, negative factors), job satisfaction (patients, coworkers, work-life balance), new grad/RN, retention (recognition, growth opportunities, ideas to improve retention), and staffing.

Research in Action: The discovered themes were the foundation for the Future of Nursing WV Coalition 2021 Annual Summit. Each action team leader further explored the themes with summit participants via Jamboard. The Future of Nursing WV Coalition director shared participant responses with WV healthcare leaders to improve retention efforts within the state.

Keywords: nurse retention, nursing shortage, descriptive qualitative research, asynchronous email interview, thematic analysis, In Vivo coding

Future of Nursing West Virginia Action Coalition Bedside Nurse Retention Study

Registered nursing (RN) is one of the fastest-growing occupations in the United States. The number of RNs needed to meet the health care demands of Americans is roughly 203,700 each year through the year 2026 (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2020). A 2007 study discovered that 13% of new graduate nurses changed their primary job within one year, and 37% stated they were considering a job change (AACN, 2020). Roughly 40% of new graduate nurses wish to leave the nursing profession within one year, highlighting the need for retention efforts within health care organizations. As discovered by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of experienced RNs can lead to poor patient outcomes and increased patient mortality. This descriptive qualitative study aimed to identify factors to retain experienced nurses at the bedside in West Virginia (WV). The results of this study may provide health care organization leaders within the state and US strategies to retain experienced RNs.

Review of the Current Literature

Nurse staffing and job satisfaction (Hairr et al., 2014; Vardaman et al., 2020), interprofessional relationships (Laflamme et al., 2019), cultural differences (Dols et al., 2019), and generational differences (Dols et al., 2019) are cited in the literature as critical factors in nurse turnover. Additionally, the lack of work-life quality and healthy work environments lead to nurse turnover (Scruth et al., 2018). A meta-analysis performed by Nei et al. (2015) discovered that nurses left bedside positions due to poor leadership, challenging work schedules, poor teamwork, and overall low job satisfaction. Surprisingly, nursing salaries were not a factor in nurse turnover (Nei et al., 2015). Current studies involve nurses from various

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years of experience. Few US studies focus on the retention efforts of bedside RNs with five or more years of experience.

A 2018 British systematic mixed-methods literature review was conducted on the factors influencing critical care nurses' intent to leave (ITL). The systematic review analyzed 15 studies-13 cross-sectional and three qualitative-for thematic analysis resulting in three main themes. The review discovered the themes of quality work environment, nature of working relationships, and traumatic and stressful workplace experiences. The researchers extensively discussed the themes of quality work environment and nature of working relationships confirming previous studies (Khan et al., 2018). However, the discussion of traumatic and stressful workplace experiences was brief, which may or may not have yielded similar findings noted in Scruth et al. (2018). Although this study was conducted in Britain, focusing on critical care nurses, the themes discovered have global application.

Wu et al. (2019) performed a qualitative focus group study in Taiwan focusing on nurse retention. One component of the sample's inclusion criteria was employment as a full-time RN for at least five years. The RNs in this study cited caring for others as central to nursing's mission and religious calling. When the RN understands what nursing is, the RN can be satisfied in their role and work environment (Wu et al., 2019). The results of this study revealed that Taiwan's cultural and religious norms within the nursing profession have a strong influence on nurse retention limiting global application.

A Canadian systematic review aimed to report effective retention strategies for experienced RNs. This 2014 study concluded that multiple retention strategies were required to maintain an experienced RN workforce, such as mentoring, teamwork enhancement,

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extensive orientation, and encouraging leadership interest (Lartey et al., 2014). The results of this study were confirmed by Tucker et al. (2019), who developed a career planning and mentoring program for new graduate nurses. Pre-assessment and post-assessment of the mentoring program identified similar themes as Lartey et al. (2014), reinforcing the complexity of the nursing shortage and the need for health care organizations to focus on multiple strategies to retain experienced RNs at the bedside across the globe.

Regionally, the state of West Virginia (WV) struggles to retain bedside RNs. The West Virginia Workforce Data Snapshots 2017 discovered a slight upward trend in the number of RNs licensed in WV, but only 67% of those RNs resided in the state. It was discovered that RNs resided in Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The data demonstrate that WV RN salaries were the lowest in the region, further complicating the RN shortage within the state (West Virginia Center for Nursing, 2017). The Future of Nursing WV Action Coalition sought to understand further experienced RN retention within the state. Due to the lack of current US studies on retaining experienced RNs, this study fills a literature gap with global application.

The Future of Nursing West Virginia (WV) Action Coalition

The Future of Nursing West Virginia Action Coalition's (i.e., the Coalition) mission is to implement the eight recommendations from the Institute of Medicine report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* (2010). A key initiative of the Coalition is to address nursing workforce shortages at the bedside. A bi-annual Nursing Workforce Summit calls together nurse leaders across the state to evaluate current workforce data and brainstorm strategies to improve RN recruitment and retention.

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Acknowledging the need for retention, the Future of Nursing WV Action Coalition's 2017 Nursing Workforce Summit focused on five topics relevant to the state's nursing workforce, with the topic of retention a key focus. A brainstorming session on currently licensed RN retention strategies resulted in the themes of onboarding, mentorship, benefits and wages, clinical ladders, engagement and empowerment, workplace environment, recognition, education, role transition, and the state legislature (WV Nursing Workforce Summit, 2017). Four action teams were developed based on the results from the summit, with one focusing on the recruitment and retention of bedside nurses in the state.

The Recruitment and Retention Action Team consisted of nurse managers from across the state. These managers reported that the average length of employment of a bedside RN was three years. Job stress, other job opportunities, and obtaining nurse practitioner certification were the main reasons WV RNs left the bedside (WV Nursing Workforce Summit, 2017). Because experienced RN retention was not previously studied, the Coalition's Recruitment and Retention Action Team set a goal to study retention strategies to maintain an experienced nursing workforce within the state.

Researcher Role

The Coalition director sent a call for qualitative researchers in the late winter of 2020. This researcher was selected to develop and perform a qualitative study on nurse retention of experienced bedside nurses in WV based on the researcher's focus on RN workforce development and qualitative research. The researcher and the Coalition director met virtually to discuss the study's purpose, timeline, and state resources. Once approved by the Coalition director, the study was developed. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained by

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the researcher's employer, Shepherd University. Researcher bias was addressed using a reflective diary to assess positionality. Journaling also ensured credibility and confirmability (Amankwaa, 2016). Additional discussion on the researcher's role will occur in applicable sections of this paper.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to explore the factors essential to maintaining a highly qualified WV RNs at the bedside. Engaging the perspectives of experienced nurses currently working at the bedside generated an understanding of why WV RNs continued in their positions. Noting why RNs stay at the bedside will assist nurse leaders in developing retention strategies that may assist in alleviating the nursing shortage within the state.

Study Aim

This qualitative descriptive study aimed to explore the critical factors of nurse retention for nurses with over five years of experience who have remained bedside nurses in the state of West Virginia. Nurse retention was defined as RNs who remain bedside nurses on one nursing unit for five years or more. The research aimed to answer the following question: What factors encourage an entry-level registered nurse to remain employed at the same nursing unit for five or more years?

Methodology

Design and Setting

Because of the rural nature of the state of West Virginia and the current COVID-19 pandemic, this asynchronous qualitative descriptive study was conducted via a Gmail email

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account accessed only by the researcher. Gmail is encrypted with TLS while transferring data, and it protects emails at rest with industry-standard 128-bit encryption. The secured account contained a strong password of at least 12 characters composed of lower-case letters, upper-case letters, numbers, and symbols by the researcher. Two-factor authentication was enabled, making it impossible for a hacker to access the information with only a password. The password was updated every three months. Each step ensured the confidentiality of participant data.

Sample

The inclusion criteria for the study were: (a) entry-level registered nurse licensed in the state of WV, (b) currently employed in a health care organization in WV, (c) and five years or more experience at the bedside on the same nursing unit with the state of WV. Once IRB approval was obtained from Shepherd University, the principal investigator emailed the call for participants to the Coalition director. The Coalition director emailed the call for participants to all nurse managers within the state. The nurse managers forwarded the email call for participants to their respective nursing staff. Sampling occurred via snowballing.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was conducted electronically via the Gmail account. When a potential participant emailed the researcher, the researcher determined if the participant met the study's inclusion criteria and responded with a standard email message highlighting the study's purpose, method, time commitment, and informed consent. If the participant chose to participate in the study, the participant responded by stating within the body of the email, "I have read the informed consent and I agree to participate in this study. I understand I can withdraw from this study at any time."

Procedures

The study was conducted between September 2020 and November 2020 via an asynchronous email exchange. The researcher identified participants in the order of email inquiry (i.e., Participant 1). Once informed consent was obtained, the researcher emailed the participant the interview questions. A reminder email was sent if a participant did not respond to the interview questions within two weeks. A lack of response to the reminder within two weeks resulted in withdrawing the participant from the study. The Coalition director sent two additional calls for participants.

The researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide (see Table 1). Demographic data were obtained during the email exchange to inform the study. The research participants responded to the demographic and interview questions by typing responses to each question in their own words. Clarification of a participant's response(s) occurred via member-checking, ensuring credibility.

Table 1

Interview Guide

1. How many years have you worked at a registered nurse?
2. Describe the nursing unit where you are currently employed (i.e. labor and delivery).
3. How many years have you worked as a registered nurse on the unit where you are currently employed?
4. Please share the main reason(s) you remain employed on your nursing unit.
5. Discuss the factors your nurse manager and/or administration need to focus on to improve retention on your nursing unit.
6. Describe the factors that would influence your decision to leave your nursing unit for another position.
7. Please share your ideas to improve nursing retention in the state of West Virginia.

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When an interview reached its natural conclusion, the principal investigator sent the participant a thank-you email for study participation. Data were de-identified, downloaded into a Word document, and saved as the participant's number. Data analysis occurred individually and across participants using In Vivo coding. The principal investigator noted common themes, subthemes, and outliers in the data via the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software program Quirkos. All study material and data are stored in non-internet accessible removable media. Data will be stored in a locked file in the principal investigator's home for five years. After five years, the data will be destroyed.

Analysis

Data were analyzed using In Vivo coding via Quirkos. This qualitative coding method prioritizes the participant's voice using the terms and concepts drawn from the participant's own words (Saldaña, 2016). Qualitative studies seeking to understand a culture frequently use In Vivo coding to understand the terms used in that culture (Saldaña, 2016). Nursing is a subculture of medicine and has its own culture and terminology; therefore, In Vivo coding was the preferred coding method for this study.

As the participants responded to the interview questions, the researcher read their responses multiple times to ensure understanding noting emerging themes and outliers. Member-checking occurred for clarification of terminology and concepts, ensuring credibility. Once the study concluded, each participant's email was printed to a PDF file and saved as the participant's number. Doing so kept the entire email exchange on file for reference during data analysis. Interview questions, the participant's responses, and answers to member-checking were copied into a Word document and uploaded into Quirkos. Each interview was analyzed via

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the participants' thick descriptions, enhancing transferability. Codes, or quirks, were developed in Quirkos. Participant statements were analyzed, highlighted to represent the appropriate code, and copied into the quirk. Demographic data were analyzed separately. An audit trail was developed as coding decisions were made, establishing dependability.

Three cycles of coding occurred via Quirkos. The first coding cycle resulted in 27 codes. Second-cycle coding occurred after reviewing the participants' responses individually and across participants. Three themes were initially noted—leadership, job satisfaction, and compensation. Analytic memos were developed to understand further the participant's meaning (Saldaña, 2016). After reading the participant's responses and developing analytic memos, third-cycle coding began. Several codes were discovered to have similar meanings and were therefore merged. Third-cycle coding resulted in six themes with some themes consisting of several subthemes: leadership (positive factors, negative factors), job satisfaction (patients, coworker, work-life balance), staffing, new grad/RN, compensation, and retention (recognition, growth opportunities, ideas to improve retention). The audit trail was reviewed by an experienced qualitative researcher reinforcing dependability in the study's findings.

Results

Demographics

Twenty-nine participants responded to the call for participants, with 22 completing the interviews. All participants identified themselves as white, non-Hispanic females generating a homogenous sample. Ages varied, with the majority within the 31-40 age group. Additionally, BSN-prepared, non-certified, medical-surgical nurses with five to 10 years of experience represented the majority of participants in this study.

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Themes and Subthemes

The themes and subthemes in this study correlated to the interview questions. Questions 1-3 of the interview guide were demographic questions and were analyzed separately. Questions 4-8 resulted in discussion on the topic of nurse retention.

Job Satisfaction

This theme focused on the RN work environment. One of the main reasons nurses in WV remain at the bedside is the patients served on their unit. The complexity of medical care, variety of patient diagnoses, and community service are linked to the sub-theme of patients. Additionally, coworkers play a significant role in RN job satisfaction. Longevity on a hospital unit encourages trust among RNs and staff and efficient team functioning. In turn, trusting coworkers have similar dynamics as a family. A trusting, family-like work environment inspires nurses to perform as a team and work on the same nursing unit. Poor work-life balance issues include increased responsibilities at work, working longer hours, increased responsibilities at home, and children (Sanfilippo, 2020). Work-life balance was directly linked to staffing. Better work schedules, such as M-F, commuting time, and time with family and children, were essential to the participants.

Table 2*Themes, subthemes, and quotes*

Job Satisfaction		
	Patients	<p>"I enjoy the intensity and critical care portions and making a difference in someone's life. Often times they make a difference in my life." <i>Participant 11</i></p> <p>"I enjoy the complexity of a medical surgical unit. There is always something to learn and also something to teach a newer nurse." <i>Participant 6</i></p>

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	Coworker	<p>"I also really enjoy working with the coworkers I have." Participant 22</p> <p>"But also the coworkers I have, have become family." Participant 16</p>
	Work-Life Balance	<p>"hours fit my home life" Participant 18</p> <p>"this is the closest hospital to where I live. Before here I was driving 1 hour each way to work OB". Participant 12</p> <p>"May want to leave in future for 8 hour shifts to have regular schedule while my kids are in school." Participant 14</p>

Staffing

To the WV RNs, staffing means ensuring nurse-patient ratios are met to ensure patient safety by using a patient care staffing model. Staffing also means providing ancillary staff to assist RNs. The changing role of the RN was discussed in this theme. The WV RNs discussed their dissatisfaction with being pulled to another unit regularly. Menial tasks, proper staffing, and implementation of a nurse-patient ratio model were discussed as additional source of dissatisfaction. Only one participant discussed the COVID-19 pandemic. "At the current time morale. Due to covid, we have become mentally and emotionally exhausted. No visitors, and patients dying everyday takes a tole (sic) on you. It's not typically like that with someone dying every single day. We need uplifted. Before covid, we were pretty good and had great morale." (Participant 11)

Table 3*Theme and quotes*

Staffing	<p>More ancillary staff to assist like nursing assistants or techs. Turn team. More PT/OT available to help with ambulation, getting OOB." Participant 10</p> <p>"Less menial tasks that can be accomplished by other and more appropriate ancillary departments." Participant 12</p>
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	<p>"Keeping the unit adequately staffed. Making sure staff works the hours they expect to work and not requiring extra." <i>Participant 21</i></p> <p>"Fight for better patient/staff ratios due to increase needs of staff, charting and infection control practices." <i>Participant 3</i></p> <p>"Smaller staffing to patient ratios will help retain the nurses in WV. Nurses see numbers, even if they don't see the acuity level. National leaders have said that if you advertise and keep smaller staffing ratios that nurses will flock here and stay here." <i>Participant 5</i></p>
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New Grad/RN

The lack of preparedness of new graduates generated many comments. WV RNs discussed their concerns about the future of nursing. The participant's main concerns were skill level, lack of hands-on preparation, brief orientation, and increased patient acuity. Improved preceptor training and compensation were cited as a need.

Table 4*Theme and quotes*

New Grad/RN	<p>"Need improvements made in educating the new nurse just graduating and starting out in nursing. I feel new grads lack the essential basic skills to nurse." <i>Participant 13</i></p> <p>"I am very worried about the future of nursing. The younger/newer nurses are not prepared when they come out of school, they lack hands on training in skills. They are given short orientations and then expected to handle/manage a large patient assignment with little nursing skills. They become overwhelmed and leave for other nursing professions." <i>Participant 3</i></p> <p>"Most patients that come to WVU Medicine do not just have one medical problem, they have a list of comorbidities. Nurses that are entering the field of nursing need to be prepared to care for all of the dynamics of patient care." <i>Participant 6</i></p> <p>"Need better training for graduate nurses, ie preceptors that are patient and qualified." <i>Participant 1</i></p>
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Compensation

The theme of compensation generated many participant comments. WV RNs strongly feel they should be paid for their experience and expertise. Healthcare organizations spend a

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great deal of time, effort, and money recruiting nurses, but the same is not said for retention.

WV RNs would like to see a balanced effort in recruitment and retention. Retention efforts would be improved by providing monetary retention bonuses, a higher rate of pay for additional education and certifications, and mentoring/precepting new nurses. Additionally, WV RNs stated incentives and rewards for experienced nurses, such as retirement plans, or 401K option, and increased paid time off, would improve retention.

Table 5

Theme and quotes

Compensation	<p>"I believe the biggest issue is not providing employees with a reason to stay such as better benefits/increase in pay to match the market adjustments/increase in base pay rates for new employees." <i>Participant 22</i></p> <p>"I feel new grads get sign on bonuses and other incentives but there is little such reward for experienced nurses." <i>Participant 17</i></p> <p>"...better pay and incentives for long term, loyal employees." <i>Participant 13</i></p>
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Leadership

The theme of leadership resonated throughout this study. Negativity, lack of understanding of the RN role by organization leadership, lack of support, and the inability to focus on quality patient care were cited as the main negative factors. However, discussions of leadership generated positive responses generating the subtheme of positive factors. Caring nurse managers, managers who understood staffing issues, and managers who encourage unit engagement were discussed as positive attributes.

Table 6*Themes, subthemes, and quotes*

Leadership		
	Positive Factors	"My leadership team push me to help our nurses become even more engaged and more knowledgeable as nurses." <i>Participant 5</i>
	Negative Factors	"There is always some new expectation and they take the staff away from the bedside more than administration realizes. Our senior administration is so far disconnected from the bedside they forget that we are people and not machines. If the focus of quality improvement was truly to benefit the patient there would be more buy in. However, the emphasis on proper documentation and patient satisfaction has taken over the expectation of quality care." <i>Participant 2</i>

Retention

This theme contained the subthemes of growth opportunities, ideas to improve retention, and recognition. WV RNs leave their nursing unit for other opportunities. Suggestions for improvement included the development of a clinical ladder to provide advancement of bedside nurses. The participants stated they would leave an organization or stay for a different position to grow professionally. Improvement of retention by healthcare organization administration confirmed existing themes; however, additional insight was provided. As stated by Participant 2:

"Retention in the state is going to be dependent on the individual employers, what they can offer in terms of benefits, how they treat their staff, how they recognize good works, the quality of care they provide, making sure the type of PR they propagate matches what their

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staff disseminates, how people are treated when they enter their facilities, and personal and community experiences in the organization.”

Table 7

Themes, subthemes, and quotes

Retention		
	Growth Opportunities	<p>“...here isn’t a clinical ladder at my facility so RNs with higher degrees or certifications do not get paid any differently than those who do not have them.” <i>Participant 10</i></p> <p>“ I would honestly have left if there were more opportunity.” <i>Participant 2</i></p>
	Ideas to Improve Retention	<p>“Educate managers on effective communication amongst their staff.” <i>Participant 1</i></p> <p>“More pay incentives to stay at the bedside.” <i>Participant 10</i></p> <p>“Parking is a big issue at my facility. I think ‘Senior’ nurse parking would be popular.” <i>Participant 17</i></p>
	Recognition	<p>“Recognition on a job well done. Appreciation to staff.” <i>Participant 11</i></p> <p>“Nurses should receive credit, recognition, and respect for their contributions.” <i>Participant 20</i></p>

Discussion

The themes of staffing and job satisfaction confirm the studies by Hairr et al. (2014), Nei et al. (2015), and Vardama et al., (2020), noting nurse-patient ratios and adequate staffing are key indicators of nurse retention. The study participants will seek employment opportunities to enhance work-life balance, as noted in Scruth et al. (2018). The WV RNs enjoy working with their coworkers and frequently identified their coworkers as family. The data did not reveal issues with cultural or generational differences, as discovered by Dols et al. (2019). Poor

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leadership practices were discovered; however, unlike the Nei et al. (2018) study, the theme of compensation resonated throughout this study. Growth opportunities, recognition, patients, and new grad/RN were new themes discovered. The results of this study are not generalizable and cannot be applied to all US RNs; however, the results can be a framework for further studies exploring RN retention.

The timing of this study coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic before vaccine availability. Only one nurse discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the influence of the pandemic on this study cannot be ignored based on the discussions of poor leadership, lack of adequate staffing, and lack of work-life balance. Lartey et al. (2014) noted that RN retention involves multiple implementation strategies to ensure an experienced, highly qualified RN workforce.

Research in Action

Future of Nursing WV Action Coalition

When the data analysis was complete, the principal investigator and the Coalition director met via Zoom to discuss the study's results and plans for dissemination. The Bedside Nurse Retention Study summary report was presented to the Recruitment and Retention Task Force comprised of WV health care organization leaders in January 2021. A meaningful discussion ensued regarding how to retain experienced nurses. Ideas of increased compensation, benefits, and preceptorships were discussed among attendees.

WV Board of Examiners for Registered Nurses

After the task force meeting, the Coalition director contacted the principal investigator. The WV Board of Examiners for Registered Nurses (WVRNB)'s Executive Director requested

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additional study information. During an email exchange with the principal investigator, the WVRNB's Executive Director stated that publication of the study's results in the WV RN Nursing News quarterly publication would be beneficial to reach RNs and health care organization leaders throughout the state. A summary report was developed and published in the March 2021 newsletter (Hancock, 2021).

Future of Nursing WV Action Coalition Workforce Summit

Based on the study's results, the Coalition director scheduled a Workforce Action Summit in April 2021 with a specific focus on the themes discovered by the study. Action teams presented workforce data and progress reports correlating to the study's results. Because of the current pandemic, the summit occurred via the teleconferencing application Zoom. The principal investigator presented the research summary report during the morning session.

The afternoon sessions were comprised of four breakout rooms correlating to the themes discovered in the study. An action team member was assigned to a breakout room to facilitate discussion via two questions inspired by this research study. This researcher led the Retention Action Team breakout session. Participants were asked to either state or write their ideas on an electronic whiteboard called Jamboard via the shared screen feature in Zoom. (see Table 8). For those stating their ideas, the researcher placed their verbatim responses on the Jamboard. Responses were color-coded and arranged by generated themes. At the end of the breakout sessions, each action team member summarized the information collected confirming the study's results. The Jamboard results were collated and provided to the Coalition director for further action.

Table 8

Jamboard Screenshots Recruitment and Retention Action Team Session

Retention A:

What are the best ways for organizations to show recognition for staff who stay 5+ years?

This jamboard lists several strategies for recognizing long-tenured staff:

- Seniority parking**
- Pay overtime pay for over 36 hours of work, bonus pay to prevent travel or agency nurse placement**
- Vacation Time: Add 1 week for 5 years of service**
- Benefits: free prescriptions at facility, reduced co-pays for benefits, increase in retirement plan match**
- Increase preceptor pay**
- Recognition: Daisy Program for RNs & Carnation Program for CNAs**
- Recognition: Shout-outs public & within organization (newsletters)**
- Recognition: Visible recognition of excellence of degrees, certifications, etc.**
- Recognition: Employee of the Month on unit, Birthday Board, Shout-Out Board**
- Increase in reimbursement for travel (conferences)**
- Committees with only seniority nurses**
- Increase in certification reimbursement, increase in base pay for certifications**
- Retention Bonus for every 5 years of employment** (marked with a green checkmark)
- Retention: Years of service recognition-badge buddy, gift cards, etc.**
- Title or Designation for years of service**

Retention B: Mary H

What are the best reasons for a nurse to work at your facility?

This jamboard lists reasons for a nurse to work at the facility:

- Work with a small team**
- Work in a small organization**
- Positive Leadership**
- Nurses are unionized have a voice, improved morale**
- Wellness Program, free Legal Advice, free health coach, nurse peer coaching, counseling programs**
- Create a healthy 'joyful' workplace environment**
- Tuition reimbursement & student loan forgiveness**
- People-cohesive team, family oriented, be your best in your workplace**
- Great co-workers**
- Family atmosphere**
- Succession planning, grow your own programs**
- Teaching hospitals-rich learning environment & opportunities for advancement, education, etc.**
- Nurse extern programs to promote students to become employees**
- Commuter Benefits: gas card, paying for hotel, place to stay/spend the night**
- Tuition scholarship in return for 2 years of employment**

Additional Dissemination

The Bedside Nurses Retention Study yielded results applicable to health care organization leaders within WV. To reach additional nurse leaders within the state, the Coalition director suggested submitting an abstract for the upcoming WV Organization of Nursing Leadership Conference. The conference's theme is "Advocacy, Engagement, and Partnerships", fitting with the study's purpose and results. The abstract was accepted for a poster presentation and was recorded for presentation during conference breaks. This study was accepted for a paper presentation for The Qualitative Report's Thirteenth Annual Conference titled "For a Change": Time to Evoke, Provoke, and Invoke. The conference theme fits with the study's purpose and methodology.

Conclusion

The themes and subthemes generated in this study provided solid strategies for RN retention in WV, confirming previous studies. The themes of growth opportunities, recognition, patients, and new grad/RN were new, adding to the current body of knowledge and reinforcing the need for further research. Combining research and dissemination efforts with the Future of Nursing WV Action Coalition has led to multiple opportunities to present, discuss, and develop action plans based on the study results within the state of WV and beyond. The resulting efforts have led to actionable results, such as the Workforce Action Summit held in April 2021. The opportunity to complete this study, disseminate the results, develop an action plan, and participate in applying the study's results proved an invaluable opportunity to see this study's results in action.

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