



Service Priorities and Programmes
Electronic Presentations

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What contribution can nurse leadership make to reduce high rates of sick leave?

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Introduction

High sickness rate among nurses is a common issue all around the world and Hong Kong makes no exception. Nowadays, quality medical service is grounded on multi-discipline co-operations. Nursing is one of the biggest teams among all the medical professions and the quality of nursing care takes a vital part in the patient satisfaction rate. The phenomenon of high sickness rate in nursing comes along with many problems in several aspects. For the financial aspect, it costs a lot of money from the hospitals. If it can be reduced, money could be saved and spend in a more meaningful way so more patients will be benefited. For service aspect, the high absence rate of nurses will bring adverse effects to the quality of care due to shortage of manpower and results in a decrease in patients' satisfaction rate (Gray 2005). For image aspect, nursing is regarded as a caring and helpful professional in the eyes of the public. However, the high sick leave rate would bring negative impact on the image of the nursing profession.

Objectives

By investigating into the underlying causes for the high sick leave rate phenomenon, we will see in what circumstances leadership theories and skills can be applied to resolve the problem.

Methodology

N/A

Result

Recommendations 1. Adapt a more flexible duty system- leader should assess and understand the needs of the followers. Allows staff to have their desired shift patterns is beneficial as it offers them the opportunity to make better use of the time to balance work with home and private commitments (Redfern 1978, Hurst et al 2000). 2. Hold regular staff meetings with all the nurses- questions and requests are allowed to arise in the meeting so that nurse managers can hear the voices and opinions from their staff. Employee involvement for issues within the unit is encouraged and staff should be involved routinely and deeply in important decisions (Jayram and Scullion 2000). Such involvement can increase the employees' sense of belonging and also their job

satisfaction. 3. Set up individual self-developmental plan for all the staff and have regular review with them- nurturing employees is a key function of leadership. A leader should raise the awareness of goal to his followers. By understanding and accomplishing the goals, the staff can attain a high level of productivity, innovative performance and employee satisfaction (Kivimaki 1996). 4. Hold regular talk and workshop for the OSH - regular update and review of OSH principle can lower the risk of having injury on duty among staff. Nurse Managers must strive to develop a high quality relationship with the staff by leadership practice.