Introduction

• Teamwork has been lower in military hospitals than in civilian hospitals for the past 10 years.¹
• Characteristics of the nursing staff may influence nursing teamwork.²,³
• Military nurses are more likely to be male, have expanded roles, and have less experience than civilians.⁴
• Little is known about nursing teamwork in military hospitals and what characteristics are associated with nursing teamwork.
  • Staff characteristics: gender, nursing role, experience, absenteeism, staffing adequacy.
  • Military characteristics: personnel category, service affiliation, pay grade, and perception of leadership behavior.

Purpose

To identify correlates and factors associated with nursing teamwork in a military hospital setting.

Design, Methods, and Measurements

Design and Methods:
• Cross-sectional study using survey methodology.
• Convenience sample of approximately 703 nursing staff of 15 patient care units at a large military hospital.
• 32.3% return rate.
• Final sample size for data analysis was 185 surveys.
• Required sample size was 271 surveys for power 80%, α = 0.05.
• Multiple regression analysis was used to explore factors of nursing teamwork from staff and military characteristics.
• Leadership behavior was calculated as a composite score and as leadership factor scores (leading and being a member).

Measurements:
• Nursing Teamwork Survey (NTS)
• Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ form XII)
• Participant burden < 30 minutes.

Findings

• Regression models were significant (p < .001), and explained 45% to 48% of the variance in nursing teamwork.
  • The significant variables in the models were nursing role, staffing adequacy, personnel category, and leadership behavior.
  • Staff characteristics accounted for 7% of the variance in nursing teamwork.
  • Military characteristics accounted for an additional 3% of the variance in nursing teamwork.
  • Perceived leadership behavior of the nurse manager accounted for 36% of the variance in nursing teamwork in addition to staff and military characteristics.

Conclusion

• Teamwork was reported to be worse in military hospitals than in civilian hospitals.
• This study found that teamwork among nurses in the inpatient setting is higher than reported in studies of similar sized civilian hospitals.
• Findings support the nursing teamwork literature.
  • Individual characteristics of the nursing staff may influence perceptions of nursing teamwork.
  • Leadership behavior may be an important input into theoretical models of nursing teamwork.
  • Leaders that engage in more “leading behaviors” may regulate nursing teamwork by improving team leadership, backup behavior, shared mental models, team orientation, and trust.
  • Leaders that engage in more “being a member behaviors” may improve nursing teamwork by developing trust, shared mental models and team orientation among team.
• Further research with more hospitals is needed.

References


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