

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Nurses' Work Environment and Spirituality: A Descriptive Study

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Abstract : Quality of care is a major health concern in the hospital setting. A work environment that supports professional nursing as well as the spirituality of nurses, or the meaning/purpose nurses find in their work may contribute to quality of patient care. Yet, little is known about the nursing work environment and even less about the spirituality of nurses. Thus, the aims of this study were to measure medical-surgical nurses' perceived professional work environment score and perceived spiritual well-being score and determine if the two instruments are related. This cross-sectional survey consisted of a convenience sample of 68 nurses who completed the Professional Practice Environment Scale (PPE) and Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWB) on the hospital website during working hours. Several PPE subscale scores differed significantly among the various clinical units. As the nurse's age, and years of clinical experience increased, specific PPE subscale scores also increased. The nurses' mean SWB scores were all within the moderate range and did not differ significantly among the clinical units. The overall PPE and SWB scores were not significantly correlated. Nursing administrators can use the PPE scores from this study to address the specific needs of individual clinical units. Older and more experienced nurses may serve as resources for younger, less experienced nurses. Both instruments can be administered repeatedly over time to monitor trends. Based on the SWB data, nurses in this study reported average levels of spiritual well-being. However, there is a need to learn more about the specific spiritual needs of nurses. Spirituality of nurses as well as the nurse's work environment are separate concepts that each merit further investigation and may add to the knowledge base for increased quality patient care.

Keywords: professional practice environment, spirituality, spirituality of nurses, nursing work environment, nursing, quality nursing care, quality patient care.