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Burnout Among Emergency Room Nurses: Evaluating the Intervention of Scheduled Breaks

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Nursing 4414: Advanced Clinical Practicum

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Burnout among bedside hospital nurses has contributed to a nationwide shortage of nurses. Nurses stand as one of the pillars of the American medical system, and a shortage of nursing staff contributes to a strain on this system and decreases the quality of patient care. Emergency Department nurses serve as the point of care initiation for many patients, and burnout rates are high in the ED. The purpose of this project is to investigate the effects of taking 30 minute breaks in the Emergency Department on nursing staff burnout. This project is supported by current literature including two studies on burnout in the Emergency Department, one qualitative and one quantitative. A literature review that defines both burnout and traits combating burnout is included. Similar interventions to combat burnout in the ED such as naps on night shift and the implementation of a relaxation room are also reviewed. The proposed project will select two groups of nurses in an urban, level 2 trauma Emergency Department. Both groups will be given an initial survey with a qualitative score correlating to their level of burnout, including their resiliency to burnout. An experimental group will take one, 30 minute scheduled break on each shift and a control group will not. After 12 weeks both groups will be given a final survey with the same set of questions. The surveys from the control and experimental group will be evaluated for any changes in levels of burnout or resilience to determine the effectiveness of the scheduled break.