

ABSTRACT

Nursing challenges in in-patient and community mental health care: A comparative study

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Nurses within different health-care systems describe similar flaws in their work environments, in relation to hospital care quality. Consequently, it is necessary to investigate the professional, managerial and workforce challenges related to nursing, as well as the organizational, institutional, and environmental elements that may affect patient care. There is a lack of available research in local and international literature, which aim to explore the challenges of nurses working in both in-patient and community mental health settings.

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by nurses working in-patient and community mental health settings whilst also comparing the 2 settings together. The study explored the challenges faced by nurses working in in-patient and community mental health settings, as well as whether sociodemographic factors influenced the challenges.

A descriptive cross-sectional quantitative study design was used. 279 nurses from in-patients and community mental health settings completed the Participants completed the Professional Practice Work Environment Inventory (PPWEI) survey, resulting in a response rate of 69%.

Results showed that nurses working in-patient settings experience more challenges than the nurses working in mental health community setting. Additionally, other variables such as current work status, nursing experience, working shift, and education were thought to contribute to challenges in this study. Maltese nurses working dayshift only and nightshift only experience more challenges than nurses working regular shift. Furthermore, nurses with a lower level of education showed that they experience more challenges than nurses with a higher level of education. Results also highlight that nurses working full-time face the most challenges.

Nurses should be provided with training to gain critical thinking skills and to increase their knowledge. All nurses should also be provided by clinical supervision to support staff with any clinical difficulties, this can lead to reduction of stress, burnout and increase job satisfaction.