Predictors of Compassion Fatigue Ratings among Healthcare Workers
Ashley English, BSN, RN
Kootenai Health
Denise Smart, Kenn Daratha, Jennifer James, Marian Wilson, Belinda Childers, Chris Morgan

Problem: Compassion Fatigue is described as “the negative effects on clinicians due to working with traumatized clients” (Bride, Radey & Figley, 2007). Quality of work may be affected by lack of ability to nurture (Bride, et al, 2007; Joinson, 1992), poor job attitude, lack of concern, lateness and/or absenteeism, (Collins & Long, 2003).

Evidence: Studies have shown increased awareness for compassion fatigue, its toll on health care workers, and means for its prevention and management. Providing care, compassion and empathy to patients takes a toll on an individual, and can cause healthcare providers to have less compassion and empathy for the suffering of others.

Strategy: The purpose of this study is to determine: 1) is there a difference in compassion fatigue scores between departments and 2) is there a difference in scores between licensed and non-licensed employees and 3) is there a difference between stationary staff and “floating” staff and 4) are there predictors related to compassion fatigue scores.

Practice Change: An exploratory study with predictive design was used to collect data from 253 staff members. A questionnaire accompanied the Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue (ProQOL) Version 5 (2009) survey. This tool measures professional quality of life.

Evaluation and Results: Data was collected for a 55% response rate. 65% of employees scored within the “average” range of compassion satisfaction; 60% scored within the “low” range of burnout; and 76% scored within the “low” range of secondary traumatic stress. Favorable subscale predictors were also identified.

Recommendations: Limitations of this study include the self-reporting instrument that was used and convenience sampling. It is possible employees answered based on perceptions about desirable responses since unfavorable scores were rare.

Lessons Learned: Findings add to the literature regarding differences and relationships among variables of work setting, occupation, and levels of compassion fatigue. Predictors add to the knowledge base and suggest what may be done to improve levels of compassion fatigue among healthcare workers.

Bibliography


