

Bedside Registered Nurse Retention: A Qualitative Study

Mary E. Hancock, PhD, RNC-OB, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV

Background

- 203,700 RNs needed each year through the year 2026
- 13% of new graduate nurses changed their primary job within one year and 37% stated they were considering a job change
- Roughly 40% of new graduate nurses wish to leave nursing within one year
- Few studies focus on retaining experienced RNs

Purpose

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to identify factors to retain experienced bedside nurses in the state of West Virginia.

Methods & Participants

Qualitative approach conducted via email using a semi-structured interview guide. Inclusion criteria: (1) licensed WV RN, (2) currently employed as a WV RN, & (3) employed on the same unit for ≥ 5 years.

Participants (N=22)

- 100% Female, White, Non-Hispanic
- 73% BSN
- 50% Medical-Surgical, 23% ICU, 64% Non-Certified
- 28% Employed 6.5-9 years on same unit

Conclusion

- WV RNs stated they should be compensated for their experience and expertise.
- A balanced effort in recruitment and retention is needed.
- Nurse-patient ratios, adequate staffing, improved compensation for experienced RNs, enhanced communication with leadership, and attention to work-life balance of employees were cited as needs.
- Leaders need to acknowledge the expertise and experience RN bring to the healthcare organization.

Identified Themes (6) & Subthemes (8)

Themes



- Compensation
- Leadership
- Staffing
- Job Satisfaction
- New Grad/RN
- Retention

"...raises, showing the importance of bedside nurses (everyone seems to leave the bedside)." Participant 10

Negative Factors: "Educate managers on effective communication amongst their staff." Participant 1

Positive Factors: "...she goes out of her way to accommodate scheduling requests...she also stands up for us during hospital wide issues..." Participant 12

"...nurse staff ratios" Participant 10

Patients & Coworker: "I like the patient population, coworkers, and services we provide the community." Participant 2

Work-Life Balance: "...giving more input of each schedule due to personal needs of staff." Participant 16

"Need improvements made in educating new nurses just graduating and starting out in nursing. I feel new grads lack the essential basic skills to nurse." Participant 13

Recognition: "...think hospitals in general should value a great bedside nurse; because when you find a great bedside nurse they are like gold." Participant 8

Growth Opportunities: "...I also feel no ways to advance in this area." Participant 13

Ideas to Improve Retention:

- "Senior parking" Participant 17
- "But on a broader spectrum out state needs to have jobs for the family that may play into the decision to stay in WV." Participant 18
- "Focus on making employees successful." Participant 9

References



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