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University of Plymouth

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Creating respectful and open communication within a diverse clinical practice setting: a service evaluation

Cecilia Cole¹

¹Intensive Care Unit Staff Nurse, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, Yeovil District Hospital, Yeovil BA21 4AT, UK.

Email: cecilia.cole@somersetft.nhs.uk

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Background

Around 131,640 overseas nurses from 146 countries comprise 17.7% of the UK nursing workforce (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2021). The UK Government's efforts to address the shortage of domestic healthcare workers by recruiting globally are expected to result in a rise of 50,000 more international nurses by 2023-24 (Department of Health and Social Care, 2022), as growth is unlikely to be achieved through domestic recruitment alone. It is therefore crucial to gain insight into the experiences of the 30,000 international nurses currently employed by the NHS (Garside *et al.*, 2023).

This service evaluation project aimed to analyse the professional experiences of overseas nurses in one Intensive Care Unit, in a UK hospital; specifically, the barriers they faced and how these affected the quality of their work, and subsequently their eventual employment decisions. The evaluation also aimed to evaluate the existing support systems and propose recommendations to alleviate the impact of these difficulties and through this offer improved assistance for international nurses during their tenure in the UK (Lin *et al.*, 2018).

Methods

To gather personal views and experiences, a mixed question survey, including open and closed questions was distributed. The survey was a paper and pen exercise rather than online because there was low confidence that potential respondents had access to or were computer literate. Respondents completed the survey anonymously and data submitted is maintained securely and confidentially.

Results

There were 15 respondents. The responses were tallied and put in a frequency table which was then converted into a pie chart. Data analysis generated two themes: the first is 'Positive Experiences', for example increased role autonomy, pastoral support; adequate post-graduate training. The second theme is 'Changes, this includes suggestions for a

more positive impact on their experiences, such as education on the cultural and social aspects of living in the UK (e.g., learning English idioms and phrases), protected time during their preceptorship and induction to process and digest cultural life in the UK.

Discussion

This project sought to explore ways in which newly recruited international nurses could be better supported. By combining the positive aspects of the respondents' experiences with several proposed improvements there is the opportunity to better support international nurses. This might foster a more united workforce with a shared knowledge and understanding across many different cultures (Fleming, 2022). The impact of such changes could be the subject of further exploration; it is acknowledged that this project has limitations in terms of size and setting.

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