

A Longitudinal Perspective of Professional Quality of Life and Intention to Stay Among Perinatal Registered Nurses during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Sigma Foundation for Nursing Grant Report

Aim/Purpose/Objective: The purpose of this study was to examine the professional quality of life and intention to stay in the current job and nursing profession among perinatal nurses since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study addresses a gap where few studies have examined professional quality of life among nurses at more than one timepoint.

A secondary aim that developed during the course of the study was to examine perinatal nurses' perceptions of visitor restrictions on patient care.

Sample: We recruited participants in May of 2021 through the Association for Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) and the National Association for Neonatal Nurses (NANN). Inclusion criteria were: 18 years or older, licensed as a registered nurse in the U.S., provided direct patient care on a perinatal unit since March of 2020, and able to read and write in English.

Setting: We conducted an online survey in May of 2021 and May of 2022 via Qualtrics.

Methodology: Mixed Methods, Surveys, Qualitative analysis of open-ended responses
There were 113 respondents in the quantitative strand of our study and 101 respondents in the qualitative strand of our study.

Results: For the qualitative strand of the study, visitor restrictions were cited as having both positive and negative effects on patient care, with more respondents mentioning positive effects.

For the quantitative strand of the study, compassion satisfaction was positively associated with intention to stay in the job and the nursing profession.

Conclusions: Strategies are needed to elicit patient preferences about the optimal number of visitors at the bedside during labor and the postpartum period.

Strategies are needed to promote compassion satisfaction among perinatal nurses as a way to improve retention within the job and the nursing profession.

Implications: Further research is needed to educate members of the childbearing person's social network to provide effective support during labor and the postpartum period.

Further research is needed to determine whether professional quality of life among perinatal nurses is a robust predictor of intention to stay in the job and the nursing profession.

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