A Descriptive Study of Resources Needed During Floating Among Nurses in a Tertiary Pediatric Facility

Ann Hoffman, MS, RN CPN, Clinical Leader Float Pool

Victoria von Sadovszky, PhD, RN, FAAN, Nurse Scientist

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Disclaimer

- No conflicts of interest

Background

- Floating is a common occurrence in hospitals.
- Many anecdotal articles have been written about best practices and the experience of floating (Bates, 2013; Good & Bishop, 2011)
- Of the studies found:
  - Patterns of floating (Fliss, et al., 2012)
  - Characteristics of float pool nurses (Linzer, et al., 2011)
- No studies from staff nurses' (front line staff) perspectives
  - Especially about the types of resources needed

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine nurses' perceptions of what resources are needed during floating.

1) Did nurses feel they had enough resources to float?

2) Were there differences in perceptions of resources between nurses:

   a) With more and less years at the institution?

   b) Who float more or less?

3) What resources were needed to float?

4) What ways did nurses want information about floating disseminated?

Methods

Sample

N = 220 Inpatient Registered Nurses

- Two subgroups
  - Level of experience
    - less than 5 years (n = 103)
    - 5 or more years (n = 116)
  - Number of times floated in past year
    - Less than 10 times (n = 120)
    - 10 or more times (n = 95)

Procedure

- IRB review
- Email sent out to 1,100 Registered Nurses via Survey Monkey
  - (20% response rate)
- Responded to 3 questions about floating
- Survey open for 21 days
- No honorarium offered

Questionnaire

- Do you have the necessary resources to float?

- What resources do you need to float?

- What is the best way for you to receive information about floating or unit updates?

- Demographic information:
  - Time at institution
  - Number of times floated in the past year

Data Analysis

- Open-ended items were Content Analyzed three-phase technique (McLaughlin & Marascuilo's (1990)
  - Units of analysis
  - Categories and definitions created
  - Units resorted into categories

- Frequencies and percentages were then calculated

- Subgroups determined by splits in categories

- Differences used Chi-square

Results

Sample

Sample Characteristics (*N* = 220)	n (%)
Number of Years at Institution	
0 – 2 years	30 (13.6)
2 – 5 years	73 (33.3)
6 or more years	116 (52.9)
Number of Times Floated in Past Year	
Less than 10 times	120 (55.8)
11 or more times	95 (44.2)

RQ 1 & 2: Did Nurses have enough resources to float? Were there Differences?

	No n (%)	Yes n (%)	X^2	df	p
Number of Years at Nationwide Children's					
0 – 5 years	59 (27.2)	44 (20.3)	1.45	1	.28
6 or more years	56 (25.8)	58 (26.7)			
Number of Times Floated in Past Year					
0 – 10 times	61 (28.6)	58 (27.2)	.81	1	.41
11 or more times	54 (25.4)	40 (18.8)			

RQ 3: Resources Needed to Float?

Resource Needed	n (%)
Resource/Buddy on Unit	57 (16.5)
Written or electronic information to access before and/or during shift	49 (14.2)
Unit specific routines/information	34 (9.8)
Orientation to unit	27 (7.8)
Charge nurse to check in/have access to charge nurse	27 (7.8)
Staff to support float/help float out	23 (6.6)
Tour or map of unit	21 (6.1)
Knowing who to call (i.e., on call APN/MD)	20 (5.8)
Pertinent patient information/common patients on unit	18 (5.2)
Assignments/patient that are most similar to home unit	13 (3.8)

RQ 3: Resources Needed to Float?

Resource Needed	n (%)
Nothing is lacking/everything is fine	13 (3.8)
Unsafe/overwhelming situation/dangerous	12 (3.5)
Being greeted on arrival	6 (1.7)
Consistency across units	6 (1.7)
Not sure	5 (1.4)
Paired/team nursing instead of own assignment	4 (1.2)
Sister or cluster units for floating	4 (1.2)
Hire more staff instead of relying on floating	4 (1.2)
Report with detailed information	2 (0.6)
Having rooms stocked and ready	1 (0.3)

RQ 4: How should Information be Disseminated

How to Disseminate Information	n (%)
Resource/Buddy on unit	8 (22.9)
Orientation to unit	6 (17.1)
Electronic updates	5 (14.3)
Written information to carry during shift	4 (11.4)
Resource book/bulletin board	4 (11.4)
Unit responsibility to disseminate	2 (5.7)
In person	1 (2.9)
Not sure	1 (2.9)
Give assignments/patient that are most similar to home unit	1 (2.9)
Float Nurse's responsibility to ask	1 (2.9)
Administration's responsibility info updated & disseminated	1 (2.9)
Have information located in same place on each unit	1 (2.9)

Discussion

- First study of resources needed to float from the staff nurses' perspective.

- Length of time at the institution or number of times floated had no relationship to perception of necessary resources

- Staff nurses had great suggestions on how to ease the stress of floating

Discussion

- Limitations
  - Convenience sample
  - Small response rate
  - Categorical demographic data

- Future studies
  - Replicate this study
    - Examine whether institutional measures were effective
  - More demographic data

Questions