Registered nurses’ perceptions of continuing professional education: A qualitative study in Taiwan.

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ABSTRACT

Background. As a means of maintaining competence in practice, a new national continuing professional education for nursing license renewal has been implemented since 2008 in Taiwan. In order to get relicensure every six years, registered nurses are required to accomplish intentionally planned learning activities for 150 credits. In 2014, most of registered nurses nationwide got through the renewal of registration for the first time. It is widely recognized that continuing professional education is necessary for quality care improvement and nurses’ job satisfaction. Nevertheless, Taiwanese front-line registered nurses’ perceptions of continuing professional education remain under-explored.

Aims. This study aimed to investigate registered nurses’ and managers’ experiences in completing continuing professional education, and in-particular of managing to fulfill the required credits.

Methods. A qualitative study design was used. In-depth interviews with registered nurses (n=24) and nursing managers (n=6) from a local hospital in Taiwan were conducted. Thematic analysis strategy was adopted. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from a university’s Research Ethics Committee.

Findings. The majority of participants acknowledged the importance of continuing professional education for maintaining and developing competence in practice. Course content which focused on clinical skills and patient care were perceived as beneficial. Understaffing, which led to high nursing workload and time constraints, was perceived as the major barrier to the completion of continuing professional education. Consequently, participants learned to cope with taking learning activities that interfered with less time after work. Sessions with convenient access were preferred, such as web-based learning and in-house education activities that occurred after or before shifts.

Conclusions. The findings indicate that nurses valued continuing professional education and...

Keywords: Registered nurses, Continuing professional education, qualitative study

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