

Consequence of sleep deprivation among health workers

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Introduction

There is a widespread misunderstanding that those who work in the medical industry are in much better physical shape than the average person in the general population. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought attention to the physical and mental health of healthcare professionals, as well as the lack of sleep that many of them endure as a consequence of their occupations. This lack of sleep is one of the factors that has contributed to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been shown that poor sleep quality is a significant risk factor for both mortality at an earlier age and cognitive impairment, both of which may be detrimental to an individual's overall health. Further citation is required. My research as an expert on the relationship between sleep and stress in working individuals of middle age has led me to the conclusion that stress at work has an effect not only on the amount of sleep one gets but also on the quality of that sleep. This is true irrespective of whether or not the person in question is employed at the time. In addition, not getting enough sleep may raise the likelihood of unfavourable health effects happening in patients as well as in the healthcare professionals who are caring for them. Multiple studies have indicated that an insufficient amount of sleep is a key contributor to the stress levels that professionals in the health care business feel. For instance, a review of a number of studies that were carried out in 2018 on the subject of sleep deprivation in the nursing profession found that 56% of registered nurses work more than 48 hours in a given week and that between 40% and 80% of them report getting less than six hours of sleep each night. The topic of sleep deprivation in the nursing profession was examined in more detail in another review that was carried out in 2019. The results of my own study, which focuses on nursing assistants, personal care aides, and home health aides among other

direct care workers, led me to very similar findings. We made the observation that 68 percent of nurses working in a cancer hospital and 58 percent of direct-care employees working in long-term care homes reported suffering symptoms of sleeplessness. Both of these percentages are higher than the national average. Having trouble falling asleep and waking up often during the night are two of the symptoms associated with this condition.

Those working in the health care industry are more likely to have difficulties falling or staying asleep when compared to those working in other industries. According to a study conducted by the CDC in 2016–2017 that analysed data on 26 important occupational categories, the occupations of health care practitioners and support workers had the second and third highest rates of short sleep duration. Short sleep duration is defined as a duration of sleep that is less than seven hours. Forty percent of these workers reported getting less than six hours of sleep each night. A survey that was carried out in 2019 discovered a similar set of facts, with employment in health care support continuing to maintain the second-place position at 46%.

In the field of healthcare, employees who do not get enough sleep could show their exhaustion in a broad range of different ways. Using a technique known as sleep actigraphy, the researchers examined the sleeping patterns of both 100 teachers and 100 people who work in healthcare to determine how well each group slept. By recording patterns of movement throughout the night, this approach is able to quantify sleep and waking patterns in an objective way. It does this by observing how the subject moves as the night progresses. Over sixty percent of people in both groups reported having at least one issue sleeping in the previous month. These difficulties included things like not getting enough sleep, decreasing the amount of time spent sleeping, or increasing the number of times they woke up throughout the night. Direct-care employees, on the other hand, exhibited worse sleep patterns across a wide range of sleep metrics, all of which are essential for maintaining optimum levels of performance and health. Some of these characteristics are consistency, fulfilment, attentiveness, timeliness, efficiency, and duration. The length is another factor.

The manifestations and indicators of insomnia place a major cost not only on the health of people but also on the economy. According to a prediction made for the year 2020, insomnia would apparently lead to a loss of output, responsibility, and expenditures.

Short sleep duration, poor sleep quality, and untreated insomnia may all contribute to an increase in the number of medical errors made at the point of treatment for people who work in the health care industry. The findings of a study that was conducted in 2020 indicate that exceptionally high levels of sleep-related impairment are associated with a 97% greater risk of physicians making self-reported clinically significant medical blunders. The study was carried out by researchers in the year 2020. It has also been linked to a decrease in patient safety as well as poorer ratings for the quality of care offered by nurses when they are sleep deprived. This is because sleep deprivation makes it more difficult for nurses to focus on their patients.

If you don't get enough sleep for even one night, your cognitive function may suffer to the extent that it is up to 26 percent below what it would normally be. It has been found that staying awake for 20 hours is equivalent to having a blood alcohol content of 0.05%, and staying awake for 24 hours is equivalent to having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10%. This suggests that staying awake for these lengths of time may have the same effects as drinking alcohol. If a person goes without sleep for a lengthy period of time, their performance may even become as compromised as it would be if they had taken alcohol. This is especially true in situations when time is of the essence.

Sleep deprivation is dangerous not just for patients but also for the staff members who are responsible for providing medical care. Chronic sleep deprivation is associated with an increased risk of a wide range of disorders, including injuries to the musculoskeletal system, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, as shown in the results of a number of studies. It has been shown that nurses who have worked rotating night shifts for more than 20 years are at an increased risk of acquiring breast and colorectal cancers. The

increased risk of breast cancer is 1.81 times higher, and the increased risk of colorectal cancer is 1.22 times higher.

The unusual working conditions of those who work in the health care industry, such as irregular work hours, close contact with patients who have life-threatening diseases, and less autonomy, make it obvious that these individuals may be more prone to experiencing difficulties sleeping as a result of their jobs. Other factors that may contribute to this include close contact with patients who are in need of immediate medical attention. Other factors, such as frequent interruptions during on-call sleep hours or disruptions to typical sleep patterns brought on by shift work, may further exacerbate concerns by fragmenting sleep. This may be a problem, since sleep deprivation can lead to a variety of health problems. These concerns include the following:

It is probable that the added duties that come with being a carer in their own personal lives make these already stressful circumstances much more difficult for them to deal with. Many nurses find that in addition to giving care to patients at their place of employment, they also continue to provide care for their own children and for their ageing parents. This may be a challenging situation for everybody involved. This indicates that they are providing double or perhaps three times the quantity of care that is expected of them at this point in time.

These stressful events, when compounded with the difficulty of treating a pandemic on a worldwide scale, may have a substantial affect on a person's mental health. When taken into consideration together, this is particularly the case.

The individuals who work in the health care profession are well aware of the fact that they need support in order to improve the quality of sleep that they get. My research group interviewed health care workers at a hospital as well as those working in assisted living facilities. The findings indicated that 67 percent of

health care professionals and 90 percent of nurses would participate in a sleep intervention if given the opportunity to do so.

The issue, however, is that there is no one sleep intervention that is suitable for everyone. This presents a difficulty. In one of the studies that I carried out, I investigated the possibility that giving employees more control over their own work schedules and giving supervisors more support could help improve the quality of sleep by reducing the amount of stress that is caused by issues that arise between work and family life. The quantity of sleep that instructors obtained improved by about one hour per week as a consequence of this intervention; however, there was no improvement in the amount of sleep that direct-care providers got as a result of this intervention. According to these findings, it would seem that different kinds of organisations may need their workers to receive a different quantity of sleep each night. Interventions in the field of sleep need to be adapted to meet the requirements of their individual goals.

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