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Supervisory Support, Job Stress, and Job Satisfaction among Long Term Care Nursing Staff

Long term care (LTC) homes, like other healthcare systems, have become complex working environments where leadership is critical to sustain a high quality of life for the residents. Many staff members in LTC indicate that strong leadership and supervision is important to quality improvement. There is increasing evidence that effective supervisors (registered nursing staff) influence work-related stress, job satisfaction, and job turnover of nursing aides (also referred to as personnel support workers) working in LTC homes.

The goals of this multi-site study were: 1) to assess the relationship between supervisory support, job-related stress, and job satisfaction, among nursing aides or Personal Support Workers (PSWs) in LTC homes; and 2) to determine the significant predictors of job satisfaction and job-related stress among PSWs in LTC.

The study measured the occurrence of stress among staff in the LTC home environment. Two hundred and twenty-two PSWs in 10 LTC homes in Ontario participated in this study. The average age of the PSWs was 46 years, 90% were female, 76% were not born in Canada and 51% did not speak English as their first language. Sixty percent of the participants worked fulltime and the average years they had worked in LTC was 13 years.

Results of the interviews showed the following:

- Higher levels of supervisory support are associated with lower job-related stress for PSWs
- Female PSWs have higher levels of stress than male PSWs
- Greater supervisory support is associated with higher job satisfaction
- PSWs born in Canada report lower job satisfaction than PSWs born outside of Canada
- PSWs whose first language was English reported less job satisfaction compared with PSWs whose first language was not English
- Among non-Canadian-born PSWs, 50% did speak English as their first language

The study revealed a number of helpful suggestions that can be applied at the home level:

- Administrators of LTC homes can develop strategies to enhance the supervisory skills of registered staff in order to increase work satisfaction of PSWs
- Policy makers and administrators can focus more attention on the important role of the registered supervisor in LTC settings
- Effective human health resources planning must take into account the training required for future supervisors in LTC homes
- Training programs for registered supervisors should include opportunities to enhance supervisors' abilities to be reliable and empathic and to nurture the personal side of their relationship with PSWs

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To purchase a copy of the study published in *The Journal of Nursing Administration*,
Volume 37, Number 7/8, July/August 2007 visit the publisher's website at
<http://www.lww.com/product/?0002-0443> . If you are having difficulty obtaining a
copy of this study please contact Krista Robinson-Holt, Director of Health Planning
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