

Nurse Unit Managers' Perceptions and Experiences of Organisation-wide Peer-group Clinical Supervisor Training: "A Transformational Process"

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Abstract:

Introduction/purpose: The health and wellbeing of the nursing workforce, and nurse leaders is paramount to sustainable healthcare systems and quality care. One health promotion and prevention approach readily used across healthcare disciplines is the practice of clinical supervision. In this organisation-wide service improvement project, clinical supervision training and practice were extended to all Nurse Unit Managers. These managers were trained together to be endorsed clinical supervisors and subsequently practiced peer group clinical supervision.

Methods: Nurse Unit Managers (n = 50) from across all divisions in the organisation participated in the clinical supervisor training program and peer group clinical supervision practice. Participants were invited to a convergent parallel mixed methods evaluation involving longitudinal survey of health and wellbeing (pre- and post-program) and semi-structured interviews (60-minutes). Repeated measures analyses were reported descriptively, and interviews were analysed and reported thematically.

Results: 39 Nurse Unit Managers responded to the survey. Peer group clinical supervision training and practice increased nurse managers' sense of connection and community across the organisation and, for some, transformed both their working and broader life. Participants reported statistically significant increases in flourishing, job satisfaction, work relationships, work pride and life satisfaction. Higher clinical supervision scale scores were associated with higher happiness, work happiness, and work vitality. Participants also reported that this program was a transformational process, supported high performing teams, and makes them better performing managers. Authentic and sustained organisational and structural support for both the training and subsequent practice was considered essential. Embedding expectations and governance processes into standards of practice, both from the Nurse Unit Managers and nursing leadership, were fundamental for sustainability.

Conclusions: Clinical supervisor training and practice contributed to supportive and connected Nurse Unit Managers with the capacity to improve team functioning, within diverse communities within an organisation. Further investigation in a controlled experimental study is an important next step.

Keywords:

Clinical Supervision, Leadership, Nurse Managers, Wellbeing.