

A NIOSH Center for Excellence to Promote a Healthier Workforce

Work organization and health in long-term care nursing centers : Comparison of perceptions between caregivers and management


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Introduction


- Nursing assistants account for 85% of nursing staff and provide up to 90% of front-line care in nursing homes.
- Nursing home injury rate ranks second among all industries in US (BLS, 2002).
- Work environment exposures: Ergonomics hazards, psychosocial stressors, heavy work loads, violence, chemicals, infectious disease.



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Purpose


- (1) To compare the perceptions of nursing assistants and managers:
 - Workplace health and safety
 - Work organization
 - Psychosocial concerns
- (2) To evaluate:
 - Worker-management interaction
 - Management support worker participation
- (3) To assist the selection process for a participatory intervention
 - Linking occupational health and health promotion



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Methods

- Seven nursing homes in MA, RI, ME
- Focus groups
 - 6-10 nursing assistants (CNAs)
 - From different shifts and units: Representative of the workforce
 - Two parts 90 minutes each
 - Four focus groups in each center
 - \$20 each first part + \$30 each second part
- Management interviews
 - Administrators and Directors of Nurses
 - Structured 60 minutes



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Content

<h3>Focus groups</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & safety concerns • Worker organization climate • Evaluation of no-lift program • Interest in future health promotion programs? 	<h3>Management interviews</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views on employees' health and safety concerns • Worker participation • Effect of no-lift program • Commitment to health promotion programs
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Data Analysis

- **NVivo 7** – Qualitative Analysis Software
- Interpretive discussions, consensus building, consultation with interviewers, refinement of code definitions

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Demographics

- Focus groups (July, 2007- March, 2008)
 - 27 focus groups
 - Total 81 participants
 - Average 6 participants/focus group
 - 95% female
 - 45% white, non-Hispanic
- Management interviews (June, 2007)
 - Administrators: 4 female, 3 male
 - Directors of nurses: 5 female, 2 male
 - All white, non-Hispanic



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Findings

- Workplace Health & Safety
- Work Organization
- Psychosocial Concerns
- Health Promotion Programs



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Workplace Health & Safety *Ergonomics Concerns*

No-lift program



Reduce injury rate

Sufficient trainings?



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What cause injuries and accidents?



CNAs	Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lift residents manually <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---- Short staffing ---- Time strain ❖ Residents become combative during lifting ❖ Colleagues on light duty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift residents manually • Not use the right equipment • Residents afraid of lifts • Quicker but not easier

CNA - "We are a no-lift facility...but we do lift. Sometimes you just don't have the time to do it, to go and get the machine. And sometimes you have to do two people's work because we are short."



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Workplace Health & Safety *Other Physical Risks*

- Managers only talked about ergonomics concerns and no-lift program
- CNAs
 - Beaten and kicked by combative residents (7/7)
 - Infectious diseases (6/7)
 - Trip over wires, cords or mattress hoses (5/7)
 - Poor circulation due to prolonged standing (4/7)
- Needle sticks and chemicals are not a big concern



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Combative Residents - Quote

CNA - "Sometimes what they do is **scratch your hand...or your face...** They can **kick you** if you are [alone]... I got **hit in the face** before."



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Worker Participation - Quotes

CNAs	Managers
<i>Staff suggestions and follow up</i>	
"If we ever say anything to anybody it goes in one ear and out the other. " (Center A)	"We typically ask their opinion for most things that we can." (Center A)
<i>Worker participation and involvement in decision making</i>	
"I think the aides should be more involved in the care plans but we're not." "When they make these changes they don't involve us. " (Center B)	"It's giving people, the line staff, the control over the decision... I don't make any of the decisions in this facility... The CNAs make the decisions on the floor." (Center B)

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Work Organization

Worker Participation

CNAs	Managers
<i>Staff suggestions and follow up</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidation in voicing concerns; No follow up on their suggestions; (2/7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Open door policy'; 'Staff feel comfortable to [raise] concerns'; 'Try my best to get concerns addressed';
<i>Worker participation and involvement in decision making</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No involvement in decision making for both resident care and center changes (3/7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Give people the control over decisions'; 'Encourage staff to make more decisions about resident care';

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Work Organization – CNA Quotes

- "You don't even have the time. You have to **hide and eat your meal.** Quick, quick, get it down, get it down. So, time is an issue."
- "I don't think we work as a team...If there's a light going on it could be going on for like five, ten minutes, and **nobody will answer it.**"



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Work Organization – CNA Quotes

- "With job stress, I notice a lot of times with the nurses, they like to **take their anger out on CNAs**, if they're having a bad night, they're trying to make us do more work than we're supposed to do in a timely manor..."
- "...not to be **their slaves** ...Why are you **treating us like... We're dogs.**"



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Work Organization

CNAs	Managers
Heavy workload; Short staffing; Time strain (7/7)	Not noted
Communication problems between departments, shifts, CNAs and nurses (6/7)	Not noted
Lack of teamwork (5/7)	"Having a strong team behind you makes my job all the more easier." (Center A)
Lack of respect and appreciation from upper level staff (6/7)	"Most valued employees in the building"; "Listening and treating people fairly"
No control over work schedule (5/7)	"Would like to have staff take on their own schedule and work assignments." (Center C)



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Stress - Quotes

CNA - "...When I go home, and I can still hear call lights. I took a nap the other day, and I was waking up...because I'm thinking we have to put people to bed. And I was walking out to go to my car, and I can hear beep, beep."

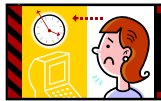


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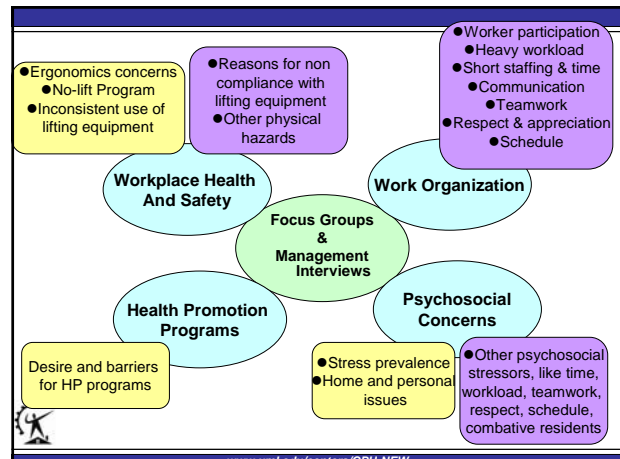
Psychosocial concerns

- Stress is a prevailing concern in all seven centers.
- What causes stress???

CNAs	Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work organization issues Health and safety concerns Combative residents Home and personal issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult residents Home and personal issues



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Conclusions

- Agreement between caregivers and managers primarily on ergonomic hazards.
- Managers did not realize or pay attention to multiple workplace hazards and stressors.
- Lack of communication and teamwork between nursing assistants and managers.
- Future intervention should be focused on promoting empowerment of nursing assistants and better communication between upper level staff and front-line caregivers.



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Strength and Limitations

- Large number of focus groups and CNAs.
- Possibly not representative of all nursing homes in US.
- No information from other direct caregivers, e.g. RNs, LPNs, housekeepers and dietary aides.



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