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The effects of education on compassion fatigue in oncology nurses

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Oncology nursing is widely viewed as a rewarding and emotional challenging specialty. Oncology nurses witness terminal illness, death, physical, and emotional suffering which increases their risk of developing compassion fatigue. The purpose of this evidence-based practice (EBP) project was to increase awareness of compassion fatigue among oncology nurses by providing them with knowledge, effective coping skills, and self-care management skills. The theory of human caring was used as the theoretical framework to support this EBP project and the intervention was guided by The Iowa model of research-based practice to promote quality care. The project used a pre-test and post-test design. Compassion fatigue scores of the professional quality of life scale V (ProQOL V) were compared from the pre-intervention stage of compassion fatigue education to the post-intervention stage immediately after completion of the compassion fatigue education. Participants were recruited from a tertiary care center hospital in Marion County, Indiana. Sixteen participants (n=17) and eleven participants (n=11) completed the intervention stage of the project. Data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare mean pre- and post-test compassion fatigue scores. Results demonstrated a statistically significant decrease in compassion fatigue scores following the intervention (z-score=-2.27, p<0.05). The findings of this evidence-based practice project suggest that implementation of compassion fatigue education can decrease the severity of compassion fatigue experienced by oncology nurses working on a bone marrow and stem cell transplant unit.

Biography

Ina L Wilson has completed her Master of Science in Nursing from Indiana University School of Nursing and pursuing Post-master's studies from Valparaiso University School of Nursing. She is a board certified Nurse Practitioner at Indiana University Health, a tertiary care academic center.

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