Where two worlds collide – exploring the role of team leaders in sustaining nurse well-being and retention

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Shortage of healthcare workers in Europe

2013: 1.6 million

2030: 4.1 million

The role of team leaders

Scholars posit a central role\textsuperscript{2,3} How team leaders \textit{themselves} view their role is not yet known

In general, team leaders can struggle with role execution\textsuperscript{4,5}

Methods (1)

How do team leaders support nurse retention and well-being and how is this perceived by nurses?

3 hospitals, various units (emergency care, inpatient & outpatient clinics), 49 interviews

March 2023 - September 2023
Methods (2)

Data collection

01
23 Interview with nurse hybrid managers

02
26 interviews with nurses of the interviewed hybrid managers

Data analysis

Interpretive grounded-theory approach
Results

Both groups see a pivotal role for team leaders in supporting nurse well-being and retention.

Two particular strategies were identified as being deployed by team leaders given their role in the organization.
Theme 1

Compensating for shortcomings elsewhere

- Always available
- Taking over nursing tasks
- Extending own work hours
I’ve worked quite a lot of overtime on the workfloor. When you have to, you do it. And then afterwards you check what the damage of that is for yourself. That’s also the passion you have for your ward.

– Team leader hospital 2
Theme 2

Circumventing organizational norms and mandates

• Involving nurses extensively in decision-making
• Alter implementation of policy
• Surpassing prescribed communication norms
"My supervisor tells me to not give details [to the nurses]. But then I think: I want to be transparent, I want to be able to explain things in detail. [...] So then I try to be as transparent as possible.

- Team leader hospital 1
Results (2)

While appreciated by nurses, these tactics are insufficient in tackling a deeper feeling of feeling undervalued.
People don’t feel heard. We also forwarded a lot of solutions [to the board]. You can listen, but you should also give people the feeling that they are being heard and valued. [...] We understand that not everything can be approved. But [now] nothing happens, everything stays the same. There’s a reason I’ve left the bedside.

- Nurse hospital 1
Discussion

In line with previous work\textsuperscript{2,3}, team leaders play a role

Efforts required from strategic apex

Thank you

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