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TITLE The Impact of an Emerging Nurse Leader Pilot Program on Mid-Career Point-of-Care Nurses: Leadership and Retention

RESEARCHER Paris Jalali
Paper presented at the 2009 Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario Conference (March).

OBJECTIVE The study examined the effect of an Emerging Nurse Leader Pilot Program on participants' self-rated leadership practices and intention to remain in the nursing profession.

METHODOLOGY

A purposeful sample strategy was used to engage 48 nurses within nine healthcare organizations in the Waterloo Wellington (Ontario, Canada) region for the study. Respondents completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and Nursing Retention Index (Cowin, 2002), and participated in a series of three six-hour leadership workshops and collaborated on a time-limited project within their organization. The typical respondent was a female (98%), RN (94%), between 30-50 years of age (70%) with more than six years of nursing experience (94%), and employed full-time (65%). Participants included 57 percent with nursing diplomas, 30 percent an undergraduate degree and 13 percent a graduate degree. The latter group acted as mentors.

KEY FINDINGS

Statistically significant differences were found for the five leadership practices between the pre- and post-workshops (all increasing). Also found were significantly higher scores for those employed full-time and by those who possessed an undergraduate degree. While mentors reported higher LPI scores than Emerging Nurse Leaders pre-workshop, no significant differences were found post-workshop. The author concludes: "These findings support the use of leadership programs as an effective retention strategy for nurses."

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