

COVID-19 and the Current State of RN Wellness Online Survey Findings

Research Study Team

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1

Study Funding

- 4 Sanford Health Foundations (Bemidji, Bismarck, Fargo, and Sioux Falls)
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

2

Research Team

Gathering the Team

- Members recruited from each sites Nursing Research Council
- Clinical nurses are the site-principal investigator (PI)
- Academic Practice Partnership provides support
- All meetings held using WebEx to connect virtually with representation from each study site

3

ANCC Multi-Site Research Playbook

- Benefits to engaging in multi-site research:
 - Encourages clinical nurses to participate in study design
 - Promotes the science of nursing
 - Stimulates future engagement in research
 - Engages clinical nurses in nursing research
 - Builds capacity for future research studies
 - Improves partnerships and collaboration across the enterprise
 - Aids in the dissemination of research to reduce lag in translating research into practice
 - Increase the generalizability of study results with multiple sites
 - Inspires clinical nurses to further their education

(Shirley et al., 2021)

4

Study Purpose

To determine the wellness level of Registered Nurses (RNs) working in rural America inpatient and outpatient settings.

To explore the current barriers these Upper Midwest RNs are experiencing to maintain or enhance their wellness.

To determine what interventions this group of RNs recommend to promote wellness in the workplace.

5

Background & Significance

Past 3 years have been extremely stressful for nurses working in COVID-19 environments, having an emotional impact on nurses' health, wellbeing, and overall wellness (Teall & Melnyk, 2021).

In a recent study, 19 frontline nurses in the Upper Midwest described feelings of being overwhelmed, role frustration related to the chaos in the care environment, and abandoned by their leaders, families, and communities (Robinson et al., 2022).

Interventions promoting wellness are essential for nurses to meet the same needs of their patients. Nurses cannot give what they are not also receiving.

Attention must be given to nurses' wellness.

6

Gap in Evidence

Extensive review of COVID-19 pandemic literature revealed a gap in describing the RNs' experience with wellness regarding:

Current level of their wellness in their personal and professional lives.

Strategies nurses use to maintain or enhance their wellness in tertiary care and critical access medical centers in rural Upper Midwest.

Interventions nurses recommend to promote wellness in the workplace.

7

Research Questions

What is the wellness level of RNs working in rural America inpatient and outpatient settings?

What are the current barriers these Upper Midwest RNs are experiencing to maintain or enhance their wellness?

What interventions are recommended by these RNs to promote wellness in the workplace?

8

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Theory of Integrative Nurse Coaching (TINC) developed by Dossey (2008; 2015) provides a conceptual framework for nurses in roles including clinical, advanced practice and leadership/administrative to address wellness (McElligott, 2016).

Has 8 dimensions of wellness: life satisfaction, relationships, spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, environmental, and health responsibility.

Uses holistic approach to assess RN wellness.

9

Design & Framework

The online survey part of the study used a non-experimental descriptive design.

The qualitative design will consist of focus groups.

10

Methods

Setting

- Four regional tertiary medical centers as well as rural clinics and critical access hospitals in the Upper Midwest

Sample

- Purposive
- All frontline RNs, advanced practice nurses and supervisors/managers/directors
- Eligibility criteria
 - Consenting RNs of any age, gender, race, or ethnic group
 - Employed by Sanford Health
 - Travel nurses, agency/contract nurses and current extended leave of absence nurses were excluded

Institutional Review Board approval granted

11

Recruitment Strategies

Nursing Research Study: COVID-19 and the Current State of RN Wellness



Any choice to participate or not participate does not affect employment in any way and your employer will not know whether you participate.

Your voice is important!

This online research survey is being sent to all clinical nurses, advanced practice nurses and supervisors, managers, and directors across the Sanford Health Enterprise. Please scan the QR code and take 10-15 minutes to provide your feedback.

The survey is anonymous, and your responses can't be linked back to you.

*Travel, agency/contract nurses and current extended leave of absence RNs are not eligible to participate in the survey.




12

Data Collection

- REDCap online survey emailed to all potential participants meeting study inclusion criteria.
- Integrative Health and Wellness Assessment (IHWA V2 2022) 36-item tool.
- Survey included demographic information and additional questions addressing barriers to maintaining their wellness and recommendations to promote wellness in the work setting.
- Took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete this anonymous survey.

13

IHWA V2 2022



INTEGRATIVE HEALTH AND WELLNESS ASSESSMENT™
IHWA V2 2022

This **INTEGRATIVE HEALTH and WELLNESS ASSESSMENT** (short form) is intended for informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

DIRECTIONS: This questionnaire contains statements about your present way of life, feelings, and personal habits. Please respond to each item as accurately as possible, and try not to skip any item. Indicate the frequency with which you engage in each item by shading (•) one of the following:

1 = NEVER 2 = RARELY 3 = OCCASIONALLY 4 = FREQUENTLY 5 = ALWAYS

Life Satisfaction //	/ 10		1	2	3	4	5
1. I feel content with the integration between my work, family, friends, & self.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I use daily strategies to manage my stress (such as: breathing, stretching, relaxation, meditation, and imagery).			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relationships //	/ 20						
3. I participate in satisfying relationships.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I feel comfortable sharing my feelings/opinion without feeling guilty.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I express my feeling to others in appropriate ways.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I easily express love and concern to those I care about.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spiritual //	/ 15						
7. I feel that my life has meaning, value, and purpose.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I feel connected to a force greater than myself.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I make time for reflective practice affirmation, prayer, meditation.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental //	/ 20						
10. I recognize negative thoughts and reframe them.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I set realistic goals for my work.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I ask for help/assistance when needed.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I can accept circumstances and events that are beyond my control.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotional //	/ 15						
14. I practice forgiveness.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I listen to and respect the feelings of others.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I release unwanted feelings (anxiety, worry, fear and anger) in a healthy way.			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14

Demographics

1,755 RNs took the survey
(25.1%)

Average age 42 years old

Average years as RN:
17.27 years

- Ranging from 3 months to 51 years

Gender

- 89.9% woman
- 7% man
- 2.9% preferred not to answer

Education

- 20.9% Diploma/Associate
- 61.6% Bachelor
- 16% Master/Doctorate

Nursing Role

- 58.1% Clinical Nurse
- 15.7% Supervisor/Manager/Director
- 8% APRN
- 18.1% Other

15

IHWA V2 2022 Results

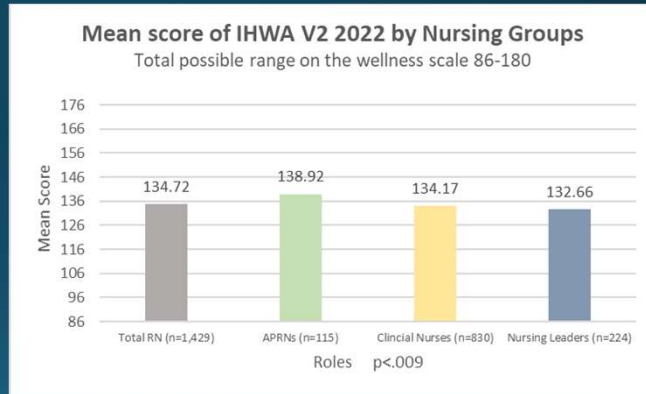
1,429 (20.4%) RNs completed all items on the IHWA V2 2022

Role	Count
APRNs	110
Managers/Supervisors/Directors	224
Clinical Nurses	830
Total RN	1429

16

Significant Findings

APRNs had higher total scores compared to other roles

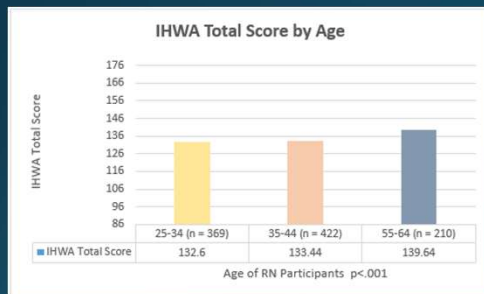


- Cronbach's Alpha for the IHWA V2 2022 in this study was 0.91

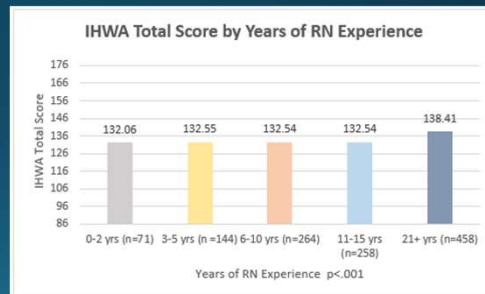
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Significant Findings Cont.

Participants 55-64 years old had a higher total score than younger participants



Nurses with 21+ years of experience had higher total scores compared to nurses with less years of experience



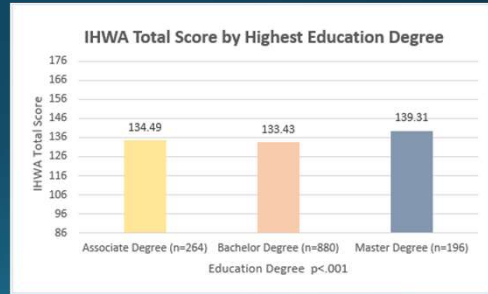
18

Significant Findings Cont.

Years APRN Experience: APRNs with 16-20 years of experience had higher total scores compared to APRNs with less years of experience

Years of APRN Experience		p<.001
Group	N	IHWA Total
0-2 years	24	136.21
3-5 years	27	136.44
6-10 years	30	139.07
11-15 years	16	135.63
16-20 years	6	159.83

Educational Degree: Participants with a master's degree had higher total scores compared to participants with bachelor and associate degrees



19

Barriers to Wellness: Clinical Nurses

Not Enough Time	Work Environment	Family Responsibilities	Access and Finances	Underlying Personal Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy work and home life • Children's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long shifts/hours • Workplace negativity • Short staffed • Insufficient breaks • Unhealthy food options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage • Children • Caregiver for family members • Guilt prioritizing family before work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited gym/fitness access dependent on locations and shift work • Cost of wellness services, health insurance, and living expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of stress/anxiety • Fatigue • Exhaustion • PTSD • Chronic illness • Weight concerns • Lack of energy and motivation

20

Barriers to Wellness: Managers, Supervisors, Directors

Work Environment

- Long hours
- Unclear roles
- Unrealistic expectations
- On call many hours
- Work demands 24/7/365

Work Home Balance/Integration

- Unable to decompress from work
- No time to focus on self
- Work home life balance not possible with current workload
- Staffing
- Always on mind which prevents a feeling of peace

21

Barriers to Wellness: APRNs

Work Environment

- Long hours >16 hrs/day, no breaks
- Role not optimized
- Unrealistic expectations for administrative work
- On call many hours
- Lack of support staff
- Length of orientation
- Not compensated for work/call > 40 hours

Work Life Balance/Integration

- Patient documentation at home
- Contacted by staff after hours or during time off
- Meetings scheduled outside working hours
- No flexibility in schedule

22

Recommended Interventions: Clinical Nurses

- Work Environment Physical**
 - Ergonomic lighting, open spaces, and workstations
- Work Environment Nutrition**
 - Healthy food options all times of the day including cafeteria and vending machines
 - Access to filtered water
- Work Environment Social**
 - Individual and unit-based wellness challenges
 - Positive feedback from leadership
 - Check-in with colleagues to determine needs
- Healthy Boundaries**
 - Evaluate policy for PTO/sick days
 - Adequate time off rotation for shift work
 - Wellness incentives built into health plan
 - Evaluate patient-to-nurse ratio
 - Leadership supporting work/life balance
- Stress Management**
 - Non-interrupted breaks
 - Improved access to mental health services
 - Music
 - Mindfulness/meditation
 - Massages
 - Walking areas
 - Pet therapy
 - Holistic wellness coaching

23

Recommended Interventions: Managers, Supervisors, Directors

Improved culture of promoting wellness-encourage staff to take breaks or leave early	Work from home, Flexible hours	Protected time away	Eliminate lunch time meetings
Job description clarification	Leadership support	Re-establish safe, caring, and meaningful work	Leadership rounding for better understanding of nurses' concerns and to promote peer collaboration
	Support group	More people to support the staff	

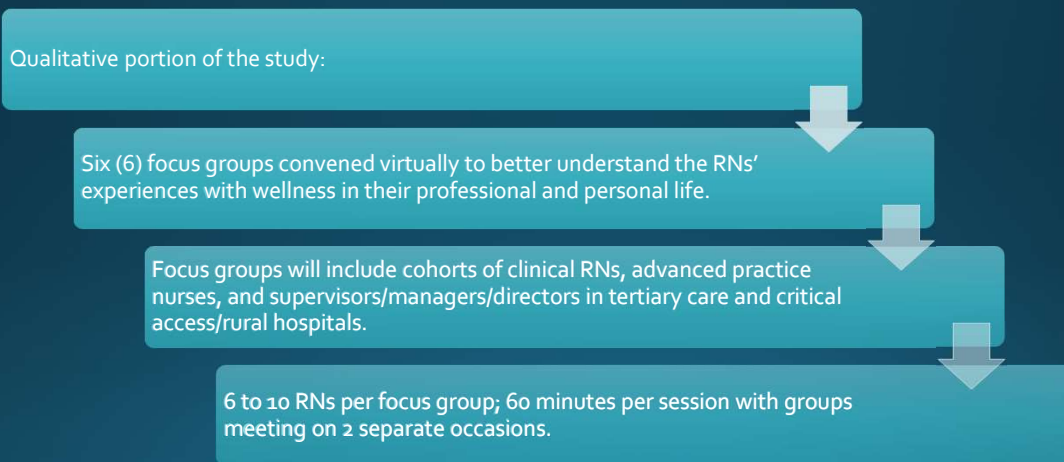
24

Recommended Interventions: APRNs



25

Next Step



26

Questions/Comments?

27

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28

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29

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30