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### Clinical Case Reports and Reviews



#### Research Article

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### Occupational stress among nurses in a hospital setting in Ghana

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**Abstract**  
The prevalence of occupational stress among nurses is an endemic problem. The study sought to determine the current level of occupational stress experienced by nurses through the use of the Weiman Occupational Stress Scale as well as determining the most common occupational stressors and stress reduction strategies identified by the nurses.

**Method and Main Results:** A purposive sampling technique and a self-administered questionnaire were used to select 73 nurses from the medical and surgical departments of the Hospital. Weiman Occupational Stress Scale and other instruments, such as occupational stressors were used to measure the stress level of the nurses. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and present a summary of the data generated by the study population.

**Results:** The study revealed that the mean of the hospital nurses based on responses about average work-related occupational stress was the mean score and individual average score of 27.53 and 24.4 indicating a 10% higher than the median Weiman Occupational Stress Scale score of 23.5 and individual average of 23. The study also found that the most common stressors were workload, inadequate resources and conflicting demands while the most common strategies for stressors used for managing stress were seeking to balance, identifying the source of stress and avoiding unnecessary stress, managing time better, adhering to standards and protocols and preparing their feelings toward handling stress.

**Conclusions:** Results from the study indicated the prevalence of stress of the St. Dominic Hospital of Accra, Ghana experienced work-related stress above average. It is recommended that the stress should be well addressed to understand that the high-quality specific occupational demands are part of the job but that stressors that nurses may experience continue to pose a risk and there can be handled through the provision of sustained peer support and clinical guidance.

**Introduction**  
Stress is a common problem [1]. It contributes to health problems in nurses and decreases their efficiency [2]. The nursing profession is known to be stressful throughout the world and has detrimental effects on the physical and psychological well-being of an individual's health [3]. Occupational stress is of key interest to employers because of the adverse effects on employee performance, productivity, job satisfaction and health [4]. Stress has been found to mediate the relationships between individuals and their environment that are considered as challenging or exceeding their resources and jeopardizing their well-being. Because an ethical and creative stress management approach is the form of psychological stress in high-level care, occupational stress management and psychological (e.g. anger) levels that occur when combined with a stressor [5]. World Health Organization has observed that stress is a worldwide epidemic because stress has recently been noted to be associated with 90% of non-communicable diseases [6].

Stressors resulting from the interactions between the nurse and her/his work environment when the demand of the job exceeds capabilities and resources [7]. Work stress is occupational work under a major challenge to workers' health and the well-being of their organizations [8].

The working environment is one of the most important sources of occupational stress [9]. Nurses' environment includes an ecological atmosphere, time pressure, excessive stress, inadequate staff, limited or no control, tasks, no social channel, unpleasant shifts and workload and long standing hours [10]. Nurses are trained to deal with these factors but stress takes a toll when there are additional stressors. Stress is known to cause emotional exhaustion in nurses and this leads to significant health-related illness in their life [11]. Stress is acknowledged to be one of the main causes of absence from work [12]. Anxiety, frustration, anger and feelings of inadequacy, helplessness or

Research for the past years shows that, signs of occupational stress appear to be rising among nurses which has been related to several factors ranging from decreasing, restructuring, and merging of care boundaries and responsibility [13]. According to Chapman, occupational stress reduces productivity, increases management pressure and makes people sick by using time, eroding self-worth, and self-esteem [14]. Nurse stress declined as the emotional and physical

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