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NURS 5001 Mock IRB Template

SECTION A: Authors and Title

1. Investigators:
Jacqueline Jennings, Jaylee Stanley, Emily Laughlin
3. Title of Research Project
Retention at Risk: Exploring the Link Between Early-Career Experience and Nurse Turnover

Note: Only one author per section

SECTION B: PURPOSE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH (Author: Emily Laughlin)

Study Overview: *Give an overview of your project. Each of the following* ***MUST BE*** *addressed within this section (leave no question blank).* ***Enter your response below each question, using as much space as needed.*** **References** are **expected and required** for this section.

1. What is your research problem?

   Nurse turnover rates in new nurses with less than two years of experience continue to increase, but there is a lack of data from acute care inpatient facilities on what factors contribute to the rising turnover rates.

2. What is your PICOT question?

   Do nurses in the acute care setting who have two years or more of experience have reduced turnover rates versus nurses with less than two years of experience?

3. How does this study benefit nursing?

This study will provide answers as to why the nurse turnover rate is so high, especially in nurses with little experience. Eklund et al. (2024) conducted a study that looked at transition programs for new graduate nurses and how these programs might improve retention rates. While the transition programs did not show significant improvement in retention rates, the authors found that things like perceived organizational support, peer support, and mentorship can make a difference for retention rates and burnout (Eklund et al., 2024). This study will look at reasons why burnout and turnover are so high in the nursing profession and find possible solutions to these problems.

4. Describe the theoretical framework selected for your study and explain how the theory will be incorporated into the study design. Jacqueline Jennings

This study is grounded in **Patricia Benner's Novice to Expert Theory**, which outlines five stages of nursing proficiency: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. The theory emphasizes how clinical knowledge and professional confidence develop through experiential learning and time in practice.

Benner's framework is central to both the **selection of participants** and the **design of the survey instrument**. The study specifically targets nurses in the **novice to advanced beginner stages** (those with less than two years of experience), as defined by the theory. Survey questions will be designed to assess domains aligned with Benner's model, such as:

- Perceived competence in clinical judgment
- Comfort with autonomy and decision-making
- Experiences with mentorship and institutional support
- Growth in confidence and skill over time

By re-administering the survey after two years or at employment termination, the study captures longitudinal shifts in perceived development along Benner's arch.

SECTION C: RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND METHODS (Author: Jaylee Stanley)

Procedural Overview: *Give an overview of your procedures and methods for this research project. Each of the following **MUST BE** addressed (leave no question blank).* ***Enter your response below each question**, **using as much space as needed.*** **References** are **expected and required** for this section.

1. Please describe the specific research design (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods) –and describe why this method is appropriate for your research question.

This study will use quantitative research design. Data will be collected through surveys given to nurses at different hospital systems. This will allow for statistical analysis of different individuals who fill out the survey. The study by Laschinger and Fida (2014) uses a quantitative research design to see how workforce factors affect new graduate burnout rates. This research design is appropriate for the research question because it will allow us to gather data that is objective and can also reveal specific trends.

2. What data collection methods will be used (survey, interviews, focus groups, physiological measurements, response time, etc.)?

The data collection method used will be a survey. These surveys will be distributed to different hospital systems around Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee. The demographic information will be based on age, hospital unit, and how long they have worked in the hospital. In a study conducted by Hayes et al. (2012), he used surveys to gather data to determine nursing turnover rates. By using surveys in his study, it also was possible to gather insight regarding job satisfaction, which is essential to nurse retention.

3. How will you ensure reliability of the data collection tools? (Find existing surveys with Cronbach's Alpha information or describe how you would use qualitative methods that are reliable and valid.)

Questions will come from surveys already used by other nurses. Laschinger and Fida (2014) used Cronbach's alpha to check that their data was reliable, which helped them make accurate decisions from the results.

4. Include information regarding where and when the research would be conducted, what research instruments or equipment will be used, etc. if this were a real study.

These surveys will be distributed to different hospital systems around this region. It will primarily be new graduate nurses who will take the survey. The survey will be distributed through Google Forms so that it is easily accessed, and the results can be gathered quickly. Another reason we chose Google Forms was to ensure ease of use for nurses participating.

5. Please provide an estimated timeline for your mock research study. (Time to recruit samples, time to collect data, time to analyze data, and time to write up the findings).

First, to establish this idea, we will contact hospital administrators and ask them to recruit their employees. We will allow 1-2 weeks for them to respond. Then we will send out the google form and ask them to complete it by a specific date. We will allow 1 week for them to respond. After gathering all the information, we will analyze the date and write up the findings. This should take about 1 week to complete.

References

Hayes, L. J., O'Brien-Pallas, L., Duffield, C., Shamian, J., Buchan, J., Hughes, F., ... & Stone, P. W. (2012). Nurse turnover: A literature review – an update. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 49*(7), 887–905. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2011.10.001

Laschinger, H. K. S., & Fida, R. (2014). New nurses burnout and workplace well-being: The influence of authentic leadership and psychological capital. *Burnout Research, 1*(1), 19–28. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.burn.2014.03.002

SECTION D: HUMAN RISK AND MINIMIZATION OF RISKS (Author: Jacqueline Jennings)

Participant Recruitment: Please provide the demographics of the recruitment population(s). Describe the participants in terms that are most pertinent to the proposal. The IRB Committee members must understand how working with the target population(s) will address the research objectives, what measures are appropriate to minimize their risk, and how these measures will be implemented throughout the research study.
References are **expected and required** for this section.

Please fill in the following information below. If you are working with more than one distinct population, information will need to be provided for each group.

1. Estimated demographic information of participants and number of participants (age, gender, etc.) if this were a real study.

   The study would aim to include approximately 500 participants ranging in age from 20 to 65. Participants may identify as any sex.

2. Describe **how** participants would be identified, selected, and recruited to participate in the study. Are there any exclusion criteria? If so, why are the exclusions needed?

   Participants will be identified and recruited through partnerships with hospital systems, including Ballad Health, Carilion Clinic, HCA Healthcare, and Lifepoint Health. Eligibility would be limited to registered nurses with less than two years of nursing experience at the time of hiring.

   Participants would be invited to complete an initial survey during onboarding. A follow-up survey would be administered either after they have completed two years of employment or at the time of their departure from the organization, whichever comes first.

   Exclusion Criteria:

   Nurses with more than two years of experience at the time of hire would be excluded from the study. This exclusion is necessary in order to specifically examine early-career nursing experiences.

3. Would the population as a whole, or are individuals within the recruited population, considered **"risk-sensitive" or "vulnerable"**? If so, how will you protect them? See below:

   Risk-sensitive populations are those for whom the probability of harm is likely to be significant because of various life situations: victims of abuse, participants with debilitating health conditions, individuals

engaged in illegal or risky behaviors, etc. In these instances, the very act of participating may put these participants in categories of heightened concern. "Vulnerable populations" refers to participants who are unable to or have limited capacity to consent. If the answer to ***any of the previous questions*** *was "Yes", please describe* ***in detail*** *the precautions that will be used to reduce risk, the measures to limit the vulnerability, or the justification for deception.*

The study population, early-career nurses employed within major hospital systems, is not considered vulnerable in the traditional IRB sense (e.g., children, incarcerated individuals, or those unable to consent). All participants will be competent adults capable of providing informed consent.

However, given the context of their employment, there may be risk-sensitive concerns related to professional vulnerability. For instance, participants may worry that their responses could negatively impact their employment or be viewed unfavorably by supervisors.

To mitigate these risks:

- Participation will be completely voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time without consequence.
- All data will be anonymized and stored securely, with no identifying information linked to individual responses.
- The study will emphasize that responses will be used solely for research purposes and will have no impact on employment status or evaluations.

These precautions will help ensure that participants feel safe providing honest feedback and that their participation does not expose them to professional or personal harm.

4. What would you do to protect the confidentiality of your participants? Include details related to the **type** of information you will gather, and the **material forms** (paper, audio, electronic, etc.) it will take. See below:
(***Anonymity and Data Collection/Storage:*** *For most human subject research, one major risk to participants relates to the personal nature of the data collected from them. Thus, it is imperative to consider how the data are collected, stored, and reported. If identifying information must be collected, provide justification for this collection*.)

   The study will use anonymous electronic surveys to collect data, such as the Survey Monkey. No identifying information, such as names, employee ID numbers, IP addresses, or contact details, will be gathered at any stage of data collection. The survey will focus on general workplace experiences, perceptions of support, stress levels, and job satisfaction among early-career nurses.

SECTION E: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT (Author: Emily Laughlin)

Consent is an **ongoing process** that **starts** when you first inform the participant about the study and **ends** when the data collected are destroyed. Federal regulations **require** that a **formal consent process** takes place where you provide participants with specific information about the study, usually provided in the consent form. Participants are generally required to sign the consent form and are allowed to keep of copy of it for their records. **In general, the IRB Committee needs to understand how participants will be recruited and consented to participate in the study**. **References** are **expected and required** for this section.

1. How will you document consent? In writing or does participation imply consent? Are your participants able to sign a form and, if not, how will you document consent?

   We will document that consent from each individual was given to participate in the study. Yes, participants can sign a consent form that will be kept for records during the study. We will use a participant information leaflet and/or informed consent document (O'Sullivan et al., 2021) to obtain consent from the participants. We will ensure that enough information is provided to the participants to make adequate and informed decisions before consenting, while not providing too much information that may overwhelm the participants (O'Sullivan et al., 2021).

2. Will you pay participants?

   No, we will not pay the participants.

   "Payment" is considered to be compensation for participation in the study and is introduced during recruitment of participants. If "Yes", how will this be conducted to prevent payment from negatively affecting informed consent? If "No", please type "N/A" and move to next question.

3. If participants are unable to consent because they are members of vulnerable populations (minors, prisoners, participants with diminished mental capacity, etc.), what provisions would be in place to obtain consent from a parent or surrogate?

   We should not need consent from anyone other than the participants, as we are surveying nurses. Nurses working in the acute care setting should be able to consent for themselves. If for some reason they cannot or do not consent, we will not use those participants in the study.

Benefits: Benefits are those tangible and intangible times that offset risks to the participants, though not every study will have direct benefits for the participants. Please address the following questions related to potential benefits for participants.

4. Will there be any benefits to the participants in your study?

Yes, potential benefits could be the changes that managers could make from the results of the study.

If "Yes," what are they? If "No," please enter "N/A" in the response section.

References

Eklund, A., Sterner, A., Nilsson, M. S., & Larsman, P. (2024, March). The impact of transition programs on well-being, experiences of work environment and turnover intention among Early Career Hospital Nurses. *WORK: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation*. https://doi.org/10.3233/wor-230537

O' Sullivan, L., Feeney, L., Crowley, R. K., Sukumar, P., McAuliffe, E., & Doran, P. (2021, August 18). *An evaluation of the process of informed consent: Views from research participants and staff*. Trials. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8371296/

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