

## Assessing Stress and Burnout in ICU Nurses

Lukas Ommen, MS4

Dr. Marc Moss, Division of Pulmonary Sciences and Critical Care Medicine

Burnout, PTSD, anxiety, and depression have been well known and studied previously in healthcare workers, including critical care/acute care nurses. With the emergence of COVID-19 and the ensuing pandemic, the healthcare system was put under increased stress which resulted in increased rates of burnout, PTSD, and staffing shortages. Furthermore, it is unclear how daily tasks MICU nurses complete affect their mental health. There is a lack of literature elucidating the amount of time nurses spend on specific tasks and how this will impact rates and severity of burnout, PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Our goal in this study was to evaluate the impact that nursing tasks have on MICU nurses' mental health. 20 MICU nurses were observed for a portion of their regularly scheduled shift and all activities, as well as the length of those activities, were recorded. The 20 participants then completed 6 surveys: Demographic information, The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), The Posttraumatic Diagnostic Scale (PDS), The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and The Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS). We hypothesized that MICU nurses would see an increase in their scores on their surveys with increasing time spent doing tasks unrelated to direct patient care. Additionally, it was hypothesized that nurses would show higher risk-taking behavior than the general population, and that this will have a direct correlation with the outcomes of the surveys completed during the study. The results showed that MICU nurses during the study spent the majority of their shift tending to tasks other than direct patient care. Some surprising correlations between nursing activities and results of the surveys appeared. The correlations that were found did not support the aforementioned hypothesis in that the length of time spent performing tasks unrelated to direct patient care did not correlate with survey outcomes. However, increased risk-taking behavior positively correlated with survey outcomes. It should be noted that MICU nurses in this study did not show increased rates of risk-taking behavior when compared to the general population. By gaining a better understanding of the activities that MICU nurses complete regularly as well as their effect on rates of mental illness, we hope that the findings of this and other studies can help create earlier interventions to prevent these from developing in the first place, and lead to overall improvement in healthcare.