



CENTER for American Nurses™
Serving the Needs of Nurses Today & Tomorrow

THE MATURE NURSE AND NURSE RETENTION

The Center for American Nurses is committed to creating healthy work environments for mature nurses through advocacy, education and research. According to the 2004 National Survey of Registered Nurses conducted by the US Department of Health and Human Services the average age of a RN is 46.8 years and is increasing. Nurse retention requires a focus on challenges faced by mature nurses to better understand the changing needs of all nurses and their work environment.

This page serves as an educational resource for mature nurses, highlighting workplace challenges of particular interest, and listing resources to effectively address them so they can remain longer in the profession.



This page was partly supported by a Fellowship from the Nurse Competence in Aging (NCA), which seeks to improve the quality of health care older adults receive by enhancing the geriatric competence of nurses. For more information, please visit <http://consultgerirn.org/>

- **STAFFING** *(click here)*
- **WORKPLACE DESIGN AND ERGONOMICS**
- **SHIFT WORK**
- **PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH** *(click here)*
- **CAREER AND FINANCIAL HEALTH**
- **AMERICA'S AGING WORKFORCE**

RECENT ARTICLES

Nursing Shortages and the Mature Nurse

http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/news/nursing_news.htm#Nursingshortagesandthematurenurse

New York Times article titled, "Really?" discusses the relationship between shift work and cancer

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9903E6DC123FF936A15757C0A9609C8B63>

OJIN: Why Emotions Matter: Age, Agitation, Burnout Among Registered Nurses

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume62001/Number1January2001/WhyEmotionsMatterAgeAgitationandBurnoutAmongRegisteredNurses.aspx>

MATURE NURSE IN THE WORKPLACE

As the Brain Trust of the nursing community, mature nurses are a precious commodity as mentors for younger nurses and are an essential resource of knowledge and experience. Mature nurses present **opportunities** for informed decision making in creating healthy work environments.

In 2005 the **American Association of Retired Persons** joined the Center for American Nurses in hosting a roundtable event titled, "Workplace of the Future: **Spotlight on the Mature Nursing Workforce Proceedings**" to address the pressing issues the mature nurses face in the workplace and the growing challenge of nurse retention as baby boomers are retiring in growing numbers. The consensus was that

there is a need for appropriate **policy changes** (see http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/news/pr2005_07_30.htm) **and** job redesign to address the changing needs of nurses as they age in the workplace. Among the many issues raised were flexible shifts, lifting and ergonomics and the challenges faced by the sandwich generation of workers who have the double responsibility of caring for their elderly parents while they still have children in the home. In a survey conducted to understand the motivations that made mature nurses want to leave, among the common factors were mental/emotional stress, internal/external policies/procedures, management-nurse relationships and the shift in focus from patient care to finances. It is the position of the Center for American Nurses that mature nurses must be active participants in all aspects of decision making and present opportunities for workplace redesign to increase job satisfaction among all nurses, retention rates and improve patient care.

“Workplace of the Future: Spotlight on the Mature Nursing Workforce Proceedings”

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/ebook/download/maturemonograph.pdf>

Wisdom at Work: The Importance of the Older and Experienced Nurse in the Workplace

<http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/wisdomatwork.pdf>

Retain Experienced Nurses

<http://retainexperiencednurses.org>

Nursing Spectrum: Confronting the Baby Boomer Retirement Debacle

http://www.helpatnursingspectrum.com/recruiters/load_article.html?AID=879.

John Hopkins Nursing article titled, "Happy Un-Retirement"

http://www.son.jhmi.edu/JHNmagazine/archive/fall2004/pages/fea_1.html

AARP: Healthcare Industry Trends: Recruiting and Retaining Older Workers

http://www.aarp.org/money/careers/employerresourcecenter/retention/healthcare_industry_trends_recruiting_and_retainin.html

OJIN: Overview and Summary: The Multigenerational Workforce: Boomers and Xers and Nets, Oh MY!

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume112006/Number2May31/tpc30ntr16071.aspx>



Nursing that Works: Worksite Design Fact Sheet (members only)

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/pubs/nrsworks/april07.pdf>

AHRQ report on the Sandwich Generation and Shift Work

<http://www.ahrq.gov/research/aug06/0806RA7.htm>

OJIN article on the Multigenerational Workforce

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume112006/Number2May31/tpc30ntr16071.aspx>

WORKPLACE DESIGN AND ERGONOMICS [\(click here\)](#)

Repetitive motion and heavy lifting can cause musculoskeletal injuries and eventual disability. The Center for American Nurse believes that the workplace design and environment of nurses should promote safety and efficiency. Technology intervention is necessary to avoid fatigue and musculoskeletal injuries. Please read [the Center for American Nurses Position Paper on Workplace Design](#) to learn more about how technology and redesign can increase nurse retention and promote safety. It is the position of the Center that nurses must be active participants in design decisions and the redesigning or restructuring of work processes, workspace or the workforce in order to promote a culture of safety.

The Center for American Nurses Position Paper on Workplace Design

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/positions/finalworkenviron.pdf>

Designing Better Work Spaces for Nurses and Patients

<http://nursingworld.org/books/candescr.cfm?cnum=33&#CENTER18>

Handle With Care

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/OccupationalandEnvironmental/occupationalhealth/handlewithcare.aspx>



Ergonomics

<http://ergonomics.org/>

The Center for Health Design: The Role of the Physical Environment in the Hospital of the 21st Century: A Once-In-A-Lifetime Opportunity

http://healthdesign.org/research/reports/physical_envIRON.php

Nurses and Fatigue

http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/leaders/2006/Nurses_Fatigue031306.pdf

The Center's Position Statement on Mandatory Overtime

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/positions/finalovertime.pdf>

The Nurses' Health Study conducted by The Harvard School of Public Health

<http://www.channing.harvard.edu/nhs/>

How Shift Work Affects the Health and Work Performance of Nurses

<http://www.ahrq.gov/research/nov04/1104RA3.htm>

National Sleep Foundation

<http://www.sleepfoundation.org/site/c.huIXKjM0IxF/b.2417141/k.C60C/Welcome.htm>

AHRQ article discussing the perils of shift work

<http://www.ahrq.gov/research/nov04/1104RA3.htm>

CAREER AND FINANCIAL HEALTH *(click here)*

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/wellness/finance/>



Studies have found that nurses are deficient in issues relating to financial literacy and are unprepared when it comes to retirement and financial planning. The following links serve as resources for nurses to educate themselves and increase their financial knowledge.

Planning all Phases of a Nurse's future

<http://nursingworld.org/books/candescr.cfm?cnum=33&#CENTER16>

Nursing that Works: Being a Self-Advocate in Your Professional Life

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/pubs/nrsworks/october06.pdf>

Trends in Educational Preparation of the Nursing Population

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/nursing/>

Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement

www.wiser.heinz.org

Managing the Risks of Retirement

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/wellness/finance/wisewoman/2007/12-07.pdf>

The Center for American Nurses article on Risk Management 101

<http://www.centerforamericannurses.org/members/wellness/finance/manage906.htm> (Members Only)

THE AGING WORKFORCE

America's aging workforce presents an opportunity to reexamine conception of how Americans view the subject of work itself and the growing capabilities of the aging population. Studies have shown that Americans are continuing to work past



retirement age and the jobs they choose are a reflection of the changing needs of this dynamic workforce.

AARP: Staying Ahead of the Curve 2004: Employer Best Practices for Mature Workers

<http://www.aarp.org/research/work/employment/aresearch-import-892.html>

United States Department of Health and Human Resources: 2004 National Survey on Registered Nurses

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/nursing/>

Letting Older Workers Work

<http://www.urban.org/publications/310861.html>

Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics

<http://agingstats.gov>

American Association of Retired Persons

2005 White House Conference on Aging

www.whcoa.gov

Keywords: The Center for American Nurses, mature nurse, nurse retention, workplace advocacy, shift work, nurse staffing, sandwich generation, health care ergonomics, nurse physical health, nurse financial literacy, nurse retirement, aging workforce, emotional health