Knowledge sharing behavior and intensive care nurse innovation: the moderating role of control of care quality

**Aims**

This study investigates the influence of intensive care unit nurses’ knowledge sharing behaviour on nurse innovation, given different conditions of care quality control.

**Background**

Health-care organisations face an increasing pressure to innovate while controlling care quality. We have little insight on how the control of care quality interacts with the knowledge sharing behaviour of intensive care nurses to affect their innovative behaviours.

**Methods**

We developed a multi-source survey study of more than 200 intensive care nurses at 22 intensive care units of 17 Danish hospitals. Two versions of the questionnaire were used – one designed for nurse employees and the other for the managing nurse(s). An ordinary least squares regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses.

**Results**

Different aspects of knowledge sharing affect innovation differently, depending on the strength of the control of care quality within the unit.

**Conclusions**

The increasing pressures to implement the control of care quality and innovate may be conflicting, unless handled properly.

Implications for nursing management

Process control at intensive care units should be loosened, when personal interaction between intensive care nurses is encouraged to stimulate nurse innovations. Alternatively, managers may develop a climate where helping others, especially with younger colleagues, offsets the negative effects of strong process control.

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