

**NRS 415 Benchmark - Creating Change Through Advocacy**

Student Name

Program Name or Degree Name (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Psychology), University

COURSE XXX: Title of Course

Instructor Name

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## Creating Change Through Advocacy

What is nurse well-being? It is a complex combination of an individual's physical, mental, emotional, and social health factors. The well-being of nurses with the increasing work demands, risk of verbal and physical assault, managing and supporting the needs of multiple patients, and lack of personal care due to burnout is a cause for concern. I have witnessed this firsthand. I work in the emergency department (ED) and over the last two years, I am expected to manage triage alone without a tech, or physician with an intense patient load of thirty-plus patients needing nurse-initiated orders started due to hospital capacity and inability to move patients from triage to a room.

I am responsible for twelve hours for these patients and am not given any mandatory breaks or lunches. I was full term with my pregnancy and managing these patients without any help or the ability to take breaks or lunches. No one cared about my well-being or how I was feeling. Any nurse who is in healthcare at this time is affected in some way by this problem. The current ramifications of this problem are nurse burnout and a worsening nursing shortage because this encourages nurses to leave the field as a whole, not just the bedside, and encourages them to tell those considering nursing as a profession to look into something else. We used to be viewed as heroes, people cared for and respected us, but now we are nothing. The consequences if this issue continues will be burnout, compassion fatigue, a possible increase in suicide rates and workplace violence, new emerging biases, and ultimately, the fall of the healthcare system.

Ultimately, Nurses are responsible for identifying their own needs and investing in their wellbeing. That said, nurses are expected to pour their all into their jobs, eat a healthy diet, exercise, get eight hours of sleep, maintain personal relationships, and participate in leisure activities even while experiencing burnout and work exhaustion. My suggestions for addressing

this issue are as follows: provide nurses with good nurse leaders because they can impact nurse well-being by shaping the day-to-day work life of nurses and setting the department's culture and tone.

There needs to be a policy that ensures nurses get their mandated breaks and lunches and a person to go to when they feel like their well-being is compromised. We, as nurses, pour ourselves into our job and providing patient care so much that we lose ourselves. Organizations that employ nurses play a significant role in shaping the conditions that promote nurse well-being or the lack thereof. That is why the introduction of hospital policies would benefit us so much. Nurses need to feel healthy, well, and supported to care adequately for people. Improving the well-being of nurses will require multilevel approaches that address their physical and mental health and create a safe, supportive environment.

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