

Occupational Health Risks and Health Promotion Strategies for Female Healthcare Workers: A Case Study of a Regional Hospital in New Taipei City

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Abstract

In healthcare settings, the workforce is predominantly female, especially among nurses. The demands of long working hours, physical and emotional labor often result in overwork, stress, and chronic health issues. This study focuses on female healthcare workers at a regional teaching hospital in New Taipei City. A total of 344 employees were assessed in 2024 using health examination data, psychological stress scales, fatigue assessments, and musculoskeletal discomfort questionnaires to investigate their hidden occupational disease risks and health challenges. Among the respondents, 78.5% were female, including 55.8% nurses and 18.9% administrative staff, indicating a significant female labor presence in the hospital workforce. The results revealed a high prevalence of abnormalities in hsCRP (44.2%) and elevated cholesterol (24.7%) among women. Women over the age of 50 also showed significantly higher cardiovascular (14.8%) and kidney function risks (13.4%). Furthermore, 73.5% of female employees reported musculoskeletal pain, most commonly in the upper body (e.g., neck and shoulders). Female healthcare workers were found to have higher exposure to stress, musculoskeletal discomfort, and cardiovascular risks. Despite playing a critical role in the healthcare system, the health risks faced by women are frequently “invisible” and insufficiently addressed. Factors such as overwork, poor posture, emotional labor, and gender role pressures contribute to chronic musculoskeletal pain, cardiovascular disease, and mental health problems. Based on these findings, this study proposes a variety of health promotion programs that incorporate gender sensitivity and human factors to foster a healthier and more supportive work environment for female healthcare workers.

Keywords: female healthcare workers; occupational health risks; musculoskeletal pain; cardiovascular risk; gender-sensitive workplace