

EDITORIAL

Nurse Well-Being

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Fall is an exciting time of year for ANA-Ohio: it's the season when members, ANA-Ohio leadership, and guests come together for the annual conference. This year marks the organization's third annual conference, held September 19th and 20th in Dublin, Ohio. This richly informative weekend extends opportunities for attendees to engage, explore, and re-energize nursing in Ohio. The agenda includes issues that affect the organization, the nursing profession, and health care overall. Presentations and posters surrounding a variety of themes pertaining to nursing in Ohio aim to stimulate participants' thinking and facilitate robust discussions among colleagues. Ideally, the annual conference will empower nurses who attend to influence change related to these important issues.

Fall also marks the third quarter of the ANA-Ohio News Journal cycle. This edition of the News Journal offers articles that explore well-being and self-care, a current matter that impacts nurses, the populations they serve, and the organizations in which they work. Among the pages, readers will find perspectives on self-care concepts for patients, nursing students, nurses, and nursing faculty.

Self-care is not a new concept in nursing. Many reading this editorial may reflect on their nursing education and recall their initial introduction to nursing theorist Doretha Orem. First published in 1971, the Self-Care Deficit Theory originally focused on patient care (Orem, 1971). This publication raised awareness in the profession that these concepts were applicable to nurses as well. The decades that followed brought an increased focus on the challenges in nursing, including but not limited to burnout,

stress, compassion fatigue, and trauma. Studies explored the impact of these challenges and how nurses, nurse leaders, and healthcare organizations could intervene to prevent harmful physical and psychological effects (Smith, 2025; Wolotira, 2022).

Recognizing the importance of nurse well-being, many organizations now incorporate supportive language into their policies and standards. Professional nursing organizations, including the American Nurses Association (ANA), the American Association of College of Nursing, the Holistic Nurses Association, and the American Association of Critical Care Nurses each prioritize nurse well-being, resilience, and healthy work environments through campaigns and resources. Organizations outside the profession also recognize the opportunity to positively influence patient care through nurse well-being. For instance, the National Academy of Medicine developed nurse well-being resources as part of The Future of Nursing 2020 – 2030 report (National Academy of Medicine, 2022).

Strategies for nurses who seek balance and well-being are plentiful and include establishing healthy boundaries, engaging in physical activity, ensuring sleep hygiene and good nutrition, practicing mindfulness, seeking peer support, and utilizing professional resources (American Psychiatric Nurses Association, 2021). Organizations that employ nurses must consider their responsibilities to ensure nurse well-being. According to ANA (n.d.), employers have a fundamental duty of care to their employees to create a healthy work environment for them, just as healthcare workers have a duty of care to their patients.

Provision 6 of the Code of Ethics (ANA, 2025) states, "Nurses, through individual and collective effort, establish, maintain, and improve the ethical environment of the work setting that affect nursing care and the well-being of Nurses" (p. 23). Nurses need to create an environment that demands respectful interactions among colleagues as a strategy to promote well-being and self-care. An environment that prioritizes nurses' professional fulfillment minimizes moral distress, strain, and dissonance. By treating all people with dignity and respect, nurses create an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness (ANA, 2025).

Nurse well-being and self-care cannot be an afterthought. Nurses need to prioritize their well-being and dedicate time to participate in activities that provide stress relief and work-life balance. ANA-Ohio, through both the annual conference and News Journal articles this Fall, provides opportunities for nurses to lead the way in improving health and healthcare for all, while simultaneously taking care of themselves. ■

References online:
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