

OP3

SLEEPINESS AND SAFETY AT WORK AMONG NIGHT SHIFT NHS NURSES

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Background

Sleepiness associated with night shift work is known to adversely affect workers' health and well-being. It has been associated with adverse safety outcomes and is a recognised workplace hazard among healthcare workers.

Aims

To assess the prevalence of self-reported sleepiness in night shift working (NSW) nurses and midwives. This study also explored the consequences of sleepiness on safety at work and driving.

Methods

A cross-sectional study of NSW nurses and midwives was conducted at an NHS hospital trust from 16/03/2020 - 01/06/2020. Data were collected by online questionnaire and included information on demographics, shift work, and safety aspects. Sleepiness was assessed with the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS).

Results

Data collection corresponded with the first coronavirus pandemic peak in England. Out of 1985 eligible NSW nurses and midwives, 229 participated in the study, with a response rate of 11.5%. The prevalence of sleepiness was 27.5%.

Following a night shift, 48.8% of nurses reported nodding off at the wheel and 43.8% reported a near miss car accident, in past 12 months. An abnormal ESS score was significantly associated with near miss car accidents (OR 2.75, 95% CI 1.31 - 5.77) and with low confidence in undertaking complex tasks at night (OR 2.64, 95% CI 1.20 - 5.84)

Conclusion

More than a quarter of NSW nurses and midwives reported excessive daytime sleepiness, although due to the low response rate, this may not be representative. Adverse driving events were common. Elevated ESS scores correlated well with safety issues relating to work and driving.