

# LEADING TO ENHANCE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE STAYING NURSE

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## ABSTRACT

### *Background*

With current nursing workforce not sustainable, numerous studies have investigated the reasons why nurses leave. However, there is dearth research related to why nurses stay. The staying nurse is exceptionally valuable; firstly, as they contribute to the workforce; and secondly, because of their vital knowledge and experience. This nurse is a leader, not necessarily due to seniority of position, but through their influence on practice.

### *Purpose of the project*

The research sought to identify the cultural meaning for the staying nurse which enabled these nurses to remain in practice in the same clinical area, providing direct patient care, for an extended period.

### *Methods*

Using an ethnographic approach, I sought to understand the culture of the staying nurse; those in a direct care role in the same clinical area for more than 15 years.

### *Results*

As a result of the new knowledge gained from this research, implications for nurse leaders emerged. The staying nurse, stable, competent and reliable, can be the unseen nurse. Whilst not looking for opportunities for promotion the staying nurse has tremendous influence on the clinical area and do not intend to leave.

Their capacity to adapt is demonstrate through their ability to keep up with clinical practice and technology; they are a true asset to the clinical specialty and organisation. However, the staying nurse can also thwart the efforts of others to make change or implement new practices or enhance the integration of new staff, including students, nurses and managers.

### *Conclusion*

This study has contributed to advancing the knowledge related to the culture of the staying nurse and their practice within their specialty area. These research findings inform nursing leaders and organisational management in strategies to augment collaborative partnerships with the staying nurse. Ultimately, to improve workplace relationships, recruitment and longevity of the staying nurse.