

# A Study to Determine the Rate of Attrition of Nurses in a Corporate Hospital



## Hospital Management

**KEYWORDS :** attrition, nursing attrition, hospital manpower rate

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### ABSTRACT

*Background:*

*The Health care sector, especially the hospital industry is growing at a rapid pace in this century. One of the main challenges faced and poised as a threat to the hospital is the attrition rate of nurses. Hospitals are plagued by a nursing shortage of epidemic proportions, may be focusing too much on recruitment and not enough on retention – a lapse that has contributed to disturbing rates of attrition. This study analyses the reasons for nursing attrition.*

*Method and methodology: all nurses who has resigned, in the financial year of the hospital, April 2010 and March 2011 due to various reasons. Both male and female nurses, aged between 25-58, were included in the study and nurses who have retired was excluded from the study*

*Results: majority of the nurses left abroad for better opportunities and to pursue higher education in the nursing field.*

*Conclusion: reasons were analysed and appropriate recommendations and retention strategies are discussed in detail at the end of the paper*

### INTRODUCTION:

The Health care sector, especially the hospital industry is growing at a rapid pace in this century. One of the main challenges faced and poised as a threat to the hospital is the attrition rate of nurses which in current scenario is about 30% -35%. In the healthcare industry, the attrition rate of nurses is the highest among all employee categories. Hospitals are plagued by a nursing shortage of epidemic proportions, may be focusing too much on recruitment and not enough on retention – a lapse that has contributed to disturbing rates of attrition. The constant churn in nursing staff inevitably means a huge monetary drain for hospitals which have to constantly plough in more funds for training

### Attrition among Nurses in the Hospital Industry:

Recruiting and retaining nurses is fast becoming a point of concern for Indian hospitals. They are between 28% and 35% as compared to the average 10.1% healthcare sector attrition rate for 2005. Industry experts point out that this is due to two factors. First, the Indian healthcare sector is growing at a rate of over 30%, and hence the sector is ripe for a talent war. In India, the demand for nurses is only set to increase. The high attrition levels are also because there is limited upside to nursing as a career. While doctors are paid well in private hospitals, than in a Government institution, the case is reversed for nurses, who are better looked after in public hospitals. The present shortage may not yet be crippling large hospitals in big cities, but is felt in small towns or rural areas. Because of the acute shortage, many hospitals are today hiring unregistered nurses to cope with their basic needs. Also, poaching of staff from other hospitals has become rampant. The constant churn in nursing staff inevitably means a huge monetary drain for hospitals which have to constantly plough in more funds for training. Every hospital has its own customized training protocols. Far from accepting attrition rates as part of the cost of doing business, it is surely something that all organizations should address, and equally surely it is an area in which HR can take a lead - measure attrition, seek its causes, set out solutions and target performance.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study was done in order to find

1. Rate of attrition of nurses in a corporate hospital
2. Reasons behind the attrition for nurses leaving the hospital

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the reasons for nurses leaving the corporate hospitals.

2. To calculate the attrition rate of nurses.

### METHODOLOGY

**Study design:** Non Experimental, Retrospective study design.

**Sampling:** Convenient sampling.

**Sample size:** 134 nurses.

**Study setting:** Tertiary care, Referral, 160 bedded corporate hospital in Bangalore.

**Inclusion criteria:** all nurses who has resigned, in the financial year of the hospital, April 2010 and March 2011 due to various reasons.

Both male and female nurses were included in the study.

**Age:** between 25 and 58 were included in the study.

**Exclusion criteria:** Nurses who left the hospital because of retirement.

**Method:** Study was carried in a corporate hospital in Bangalore.

All the nurses who have resigned from the corporate hospital in the financial year of the hospital from April 2010 - 2011 were taken into the study.

The reason for nurses leaving the hospital was taken from the exit interview form.

Secondary data regarding the number of nurses leaving the hospital every month and the nurse's count at the beginning and at the end of the year was noted.

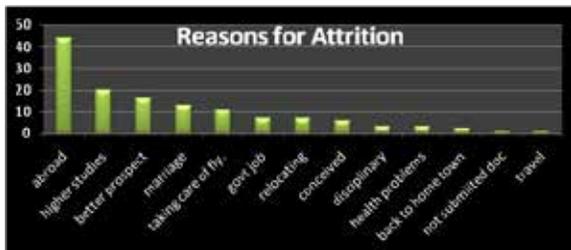
From the data collected, attrition calculation of the nurses for the year and the each month was done. The reasons were also noted for nurses leaving the hospital and were collated at the end. The top 5 reasons for nurses leaving were noted.

### RESULTS:

#### Reasons for Attrition:

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
• Leaving Abroad	44	33

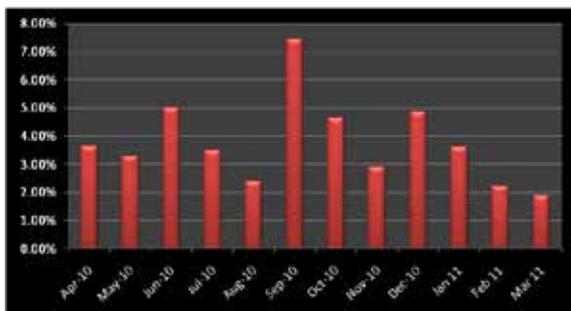
• Further studies	20	15
• Better prospect	16	12
• Marriage	13	10
• Taking care of family	11	8
• Govt. job	7	5
• Relocating	7	5
• Conceived	6	4
• Disciplinary	3	2
• Health problems	3	2
• Back to home town	2	1
• Improper submission of documents	1	1
• Travel/Distance	1	1



Attrition rate during the financial year April, 2010 - March 2011.

Month	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11
Opening Balance on 1st of the month	271	272	271	268	268	267	264	261	254	254	254	252
Closing Balance on last day of the month	272	272	269	267	265	266	262	264	264	268	272	270
Average No of Employees	271.5	272	270	267.5	266.5	266.5	263	262.5	264	266	263	261
Total Exits	0	0	2	1	2	1	3	0	0	2	2	2
% Attrition	0.00%	0.00%	0.74%	0.37%	0.75%	0.37%	1.13%	0.00%	0.00%	0.75%	0.76%	0.77%

Attrition Rate - YTD (APR '10-YTD)		
Departments	Details	Month A to Month B
Nursing	• Opening Balance on 1st of the month	306
	• Closing Balance on last day of the month	321
	• Average No of Employees	313.5
	• Total Exits	134
	<b>Total Attrition</b>	<b>42.74%</b>



**DISCUSSION**

The above study was carried out in the corporate sector hospital to find out the reasons for the nurses leaving the hospital and to find the rate of nurses leaving the hospital.

As said in the introduction, A majority of the nurses leave the hospital to go to a foreign country for a better prospect. About 30-35 % nurses opted to go abroad in view of better pay and allowances. The next main reason was nurses opting out in view of educating themselves for a better position in future. The above two reasons alone, almost made 45-50 % of the nurses leaving the corporate sector hospitals.

The consequent reasons are, were in nurses left because of a broader aspect of better prospects, which included, relocating to another hospital because of better salary, leaving the organisation because of excess workload, poor job satisfaction and many other personal reasons in which case they did not want to disclose. Marriages and taking care of the families was also one of the significant reasons why most of the nurses opted out. These reasons were mostly centred towards female nurses.

The above, were the stand out reasons why nurses left and it almost made up 75 percent and the remaining reasons, included, like getting a permanent position in the government, relocating or shifting to another place, getting pregnant or conceived and some wanted to leave because of health problems

The data collected from the Human Resource department indicate that the attrition rate of the nurses was about 43% for the year April 2010 and March 2011.

The data collected, shows that the attrition was more during the first half of the year compared to the second half. The data shows that most of the people left during the month of September and the rate relatively declined towards the year ending, March. Most of the nurses had left the hospital from June to December. One of the main reasons for that could be because nurses would have not been benefitted financially or increments in salary would have not been up to their expectations.

The attrition rate of 43% is relatively higher when compared to the market rate of 28%-35% for nurses. The above rate is a definite burden on the organisation and alarming and has to be addressed.

**CONCLUSION :**

This study draws conclusion, on the main reasons, why nurses leave and found out the rate of attrition of nurses in a corporate 150 bedded hospital in its financial year 2010-2011.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Key Principles:**

- Nurses should be recognized, valued and respected
- Feel they have a voice in decision-making that impacts their practice and work life .
- Giving the responsibilities for retaining nurses to nurse executives
- The organizational should take responsibility to provide challenges, career growth, learning and development of the nurses.
- Treatment should be fair and respectful
- Performance is recognized and rewarded

**Retention strategies:**

Some of the retention strategies which can be used to strengthen the system are discussed,

**Leaving abroad:**

1. Implement appropriate salary and benefit programs.
2. Exemplary job performance and achievements-cash rewards.
3. Mandate nurse to patient ratios.
4. Offering pay rates higher for individuals with superior qualifications or hard to fill specialties.
5. Higher rates of additional pay when on working overtime, on public holiday, etc.

**Studies:**

1. Offer educational development through regular trainings
2. Sponsoring nurses for higher education
3. Provide paid time off for continuing education.
- 4 To create a learning institution.
5. Maintain functional and state of the art equipment for staffs.
6. Offer residency or internship program in specialty areas.
7. Offer scholarships or percent reimbursement for formal career education.
8. Create a learning organization.
9. Adjust patient assignment of the preceptor to allow ample time for teaching.
10. Develop leadership opportunities for staffs.

**Better prospects.**

1. Providing optimal workload for nurses.
2. Maintaining optimal nurse patient ratio.
3. Reduce non nursing works with the help of nursing aids.
4. Offer a package that includes health,educational and retirement benefits.
5. Provide challenging work for opportunities of growth.
6. Create a learning organization.

**Marriage:**

1. Offer flexible work hours and or job sharing.
2. Offer self-scheduling
3. Offer competitive compensations and benefits.

**Taking care of family:**

1. Introducing family friendly policies like flexible leave, leave sharing. Paid time off, crèche facilities for children etc.

**Government jobs:**

1. Providing retirement benefits to nurses.
2. Financial security in the form of insurance coverage to nurses.

3. Giving autonomy to nurses regarding their profession,depending on their cadre or grade.

4. Providing yearly bonuses to nurses.

**Conceived**

1. Providing maternity leave
2. Providing free medical checkup with consultants.
3. Scheduling their duty in a lighter work loaded areas.
4. Scheduling duties mostly in the mornings.

**Disciplinary:**

1. Counseling sessions to be done depending upon the seriousness of the issues.
2. Use progressive discipline to remove poor performers who consume too much time and have a negative effect on overall staff morale.

**Relocation/travel/distance.**

1. Offering accommodation to a nurse who has to travel.
2. Offering fares spent on transport during emergency for nurses.
3. Offering flexible and self schedule for timings.

**Other strategies are:**

1. Work with staffs to create unity and harmony and promote a sense of teamwork.
2. Seek volunteers when overtime is needed.
3. Listen and take immediate action regarding workplace concerns from staff.
4. Encourage collaborative relationships between physicians and nurses.
5. Establish open and honest communication between nurses and higher authorities.
6. Treat staff fairly.
7. Embrace and teach corporate values.
8. Conduct regular interviews to know the difficulties faced by the nurses.

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