

Authentic leaders creating healthy work environments for nursing practice.

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# Authentic Leaders Creating Healthy Work Environments for Nursing Practice

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## Abstract

Implementation of authentic leadership can affect not only the nursing workforce and the profession but the healthcare delivery system and society as a whole. Creating a healthy work environment for nursing practice is crucial to maintain an adequate nursing workforce; the stressful nature of the profession often leads to burnout, disability, and high absenteeism and ultimately contributes to the escalating shortage of nurses. Leaders play a pivotal role in retention of nurses by shaping the healthcare practice environment to produce quality outcomes for staff nurses and patients. Few guidelines are available, however, for creating and sustaining the critical elements of a healthy work environment.

In 2005, the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses released a landmark publication specifying 6 standards (skilled communication, true collaboration, effective decision making, appropriate staffing, meaningful recognition, and authentic leadership) necessary to establish and sustain healthy work environments in healthcare. Authentic leadership was described as the “glue” needed to hold together a healthy work environment. Now, the roles and relationships of authentic leaders in the healthy work environment are clarified as follows: An expanded definition of authentic

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leadership and its attributes (eg, genuineness, trustworthiness, reliability, compassion, and believability) is presented. Mechanisms by which authentic leaders can create healthy work environments for practice (eg, engaging employees in the work environment to promote positive behaviors) are described. A practical guide on how to become an authentic leader is advanced. A research agenda to advance the study of authentic leadership in nursing practice through collaboration between nursing and business is proposed.

**Notice to CE enrollees:**

A closed-book, multiple-choice examination following this article tests your understanding of the following objectives:

1. **Discuss the current literature related to creating healthy work environments.**
2. **Discuss current literature related to authentic leadership.**
3. **Identify key components of authentic leadership for further research.**

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**We recommend**

The healthy work environment standards: ten years later.

Nancy Blake, AACN Adv Crit Care

Compassion Fatigue and the Healthy Work Environment

Lesly Kelly et al., AACN Adv Crit Care

The Nurse Leader's Role in Supporting Healthy Work Environments.

Nancy Blake, AACN Adv Crit Care

Programs That Support a Healthy Work Environment

Nancy Blake et al., AACN Adv Crit Care

Barriers to Implementing and Sustaining Healthy Work Environments.

Nancy Blake, AACN Adv Crit Care

Leadership: Key to quality care and retention among nurses 

McGill University, ScienceDaily

Course offers students opportunity to be leaders of social change 

New York University, ScienceDaily

Advanced Practice Providers in Urology: Demographics and Clinical Roles 

PracticeUpdate

Where are all the vet nurses? 

BMJ Publishing Group Limited, Veterinary Record

An innovative approach to collaborative simulation training on teamwork skills for pediatric residents and nursing students 

Samrat U Das et al., J Investig Med

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