Abstract:

Introduction: Occupational exposure to hazardous drugs (HDs) has been linked to acute & chronic symptoms, adverse reproductive outcomes & an increase in cancer. Safe handling precautions include the use of safety equipment, work practices & personal protective equipment (PPE). Precaution use can reduce HD exposure; however, HD precautions have not been universally implemented. Although both individual and organizational factors influence nurses’ use of precautions when handling HDs, the purpose of this study was to explore managers’ perspectives of factors influencing oncology nurses’ use of HD safe handling precautions. Research questions were: What are nurse managers’ perceptions of the organization’s safety climate for safe handling precautions? For nurses they supervise, what are nurse managers’ perceptions of nurses’ use of safe handling precautions?
Method(s): A cross-sectional, descriptive design was used. A non-random sample of 20 managers from oncology centers across the U.S. was interviewed by telephone. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and analyzed using content coding. Organizational safety climate was measured using the Workplace Safety Climate (WSC) survey.

Results: Data collection is ongoing. Results are based on 8 participants. 88% of managers/directors work in OP settings and are nurses. They are middle-aged (X=47 ± 10 years) & experienced (X=20 ± 8 years of experience). They supervise 15-300 nurses in settings where 20-425 patients/day receive chemotherapy. Written policies regarding HD handling are present in 100% of settings. Managers scored 82-102 (X=92.8 ± 7.7, potential score = 21-105) on the WSC, indicating a positive safety climate, and they reported that nurses follow precautions that are recommended in their setting. However, two interviews revealed misconceptions by managers regarding OSHA guidelines, half of policies failed to address certain safety issues, and one participant reported the opinion that some HD handling precautions are unnecessary.

Discussion & Conclusions: Organizational factors support or interfere with the use of HD precautions. Because of their role, managers affect nurses’ use of HD safe handling precautions. Research is needed to further explore how nurses’ use of precautions is influenced by managers.

Abstract History:
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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