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Healing the Healers: Prioritizing the Mental Support for Nurses

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The demand of qualified nurses is growing worldwide which has made nursing a highly sought-after profession. This profession is revered for its unwavering dedication to healing and support, and stands as a beacon of compassion and care. Yet, there are various challenges that often go unnoticed behind the scenes of this noble vocation, the most disregarded is the mental health struggles faced by nurses. Despite this profession being auspicious, its burden can take a toll on the mental well-being of nurses. However, it is seen as stigma that the people who heal others also need healing.

Nurses navigate the complexities of patient care and are the embodiment of resilience and selflessness. On the daily basis, they witness pain, triumph and loss, and shoulder the emotional weight of the patients as well. Moreover, it is often required from them to work irregular hours and rotating shifts, which may include nights, weekends and holidays, which not only disrupts sleep patterns but also makes it challenging for them to maintain work life balance straining personal relationships. These negative aspects can cumulatively result in professional burnout and dissatisfaction in nurses. It may worsen the mental health of nursing leading them to leave the profession altogether.

Unfortunately, this issue is not appropriately addressed making it a pervasive stigma in the profession. Nurses are often seen as strong and resilient but it creates a perception that nurses should be able to handle any mental or emotional stress themselves. If the nurses admit vulnerability and seek help, it is viewed as sign of weakness. In addition, nurses fear judgement and the negative opinions of the colleagues who perceive them as incompetent, unreliable, or unfit for duty. Moreover, unfavorable health care settings, such as understaffing, high workload, and limited resources may contribute to the mental health support being viewed as a luxury and inconvenience rather than a legitimate need. These notions hinder the open dialogue and impede access to much needed support.

It is imperative that the stakeholders within the healthcare system exert efforts to address the challenges faced by nurses regarding mental. We need to acknowledge and recognize that the arduousness of the nursing profession and how it affects the mental well-being of nurses. The organizations should prioritize mental health of their practitioners by offering them resources such as counseling services and peer support networks. The stigma surrounding mental health needs to be shattered so that an environment can be fostered where nurses feel safe and are supported in their time of vulnerability. Only then can we ensure that auspicious nature of nursing shines brighter than ever before and illuminate a path of healing for healers as well.