Why do nurses leave the profession?

- lack of upward mobility
- inadequate management support
- workplace violence
- too many tasks and too little time
- limited support by ancillary staff
- underpayment
- short staffing
- lack of appreciation
- physical challenges
- long working hours
- workplace injuries
- inadequate staffing may threaten patient safety

What are the benefits of being a nurse?

- nurses truly make a difference in the lives of patients and families
- life-long learning opportunities
- job security
- nursing careers are undergoing substantial growth
- diversity in job opportunities
- consistent income
- benefits
- nurses know the value of life and health
- nurses are very much in demand

Should I Stay, or Should I go?

Nursing is a calling; a profession of commitment to others and one of the most rewarding careers. It is one of the most difficult and challenging of vocations. Nurses deal with life, death, pain, joy, suffering and miracles on a daily basis. When a patient smiles at you and says, “Thank you so much for taking care of me. You are a blessing,” it is inspiring and motivating for those who are committed to making a difference in the lives of those for who we care.

That being said, nursing burnout is worse than it was 10 or 15 years ago. Nurses consistently have been asked to do more with less, with overall workload increasing. We are required to care for more patients with fewer nurses and ancillary staff. In addition, an increase in technology has added to nurses’ daily responsibilities. This is not only due to computerized documentation, but also more sophisticated patient care equipment.

Nurses have more responsibility than ever. We are ethically, legally and morally committed to keeping our patient’s safe and providing them with the best quality of care possible. Most people choose nursing as a profession because it’s either a “calling” or career choice. Those who enter nursing as a “calling” tend to burn out more quickly, as they tend to be more emotionally connected with their patients.

The nursing shortage has not helped our cause. Studies show that a total of 1.05 million new nurses will be needed in the workforce by 2022. So what would you tell the men and women who ask if nursing is a good career path? I would say that even on my worst day, I can’t imagine doing anything else. I also would say that my career in nursing has brought great joy and great sorrow to my life, but that it has helped me understand that life should be lived for the moment, and that we need to appreciate the gifts in our lives.

We all know that nursing is a very difficult job, both physically and emotionally. Nurses need more support from administrators. Patient assignments should not be designated only by numbers; patient acuity should be an important factor. We need to be taken seriously by supervisors and managers when expressing concerns about staffing. Remember, your preceptee is going to be observing your responses to stressful situations, which means you are the role model. Providing the preceptee with the skills necessary to manage difficult events is a very important part of their orientation. And, nurses need to take better care of themselves. Enjoy activities on days off, get plenty of sleep, eat healthy, and arrange time with co-workers outside of work. These are all ways to be good to yourself … You deserve it!

References: