

TITLE Leadership Practices and Engagement among Magnet Hospitals Chief Nursing Officers

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Unpublished research report: 2017

OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to describe the leadership practices and engagement of Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) in Magnet organizations.

METHODOLOGY

The Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) of acute care Magnet hospitals in the United States were invited to participate in an online survey, and 56 (13% response rate) did so by completing the Leadership Practices Inventory and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). All respondents worked full-time in an acute care hospital, all but one were women, on average 57.4 years of age, had worked on average 6.3 years in their current CNO role and 9 years on average in their previous role with 88 percent not working as a CNO for a Magnet hospital prior to their current role. In terms of their hospital, the bed-size ranged from 62 to 2,100 with an average of 550, and 64 percent were teaching hospitals, 91 percent were non-union, and 96 percent were non-profit. In the present study, the Cronbach alphas were: .52 Model; .76 Inspire; .61 Challenge; .80 Enable; and .80 Encourage.

KEY FINDINGS

Enable was the leadership practice most frequently engaged in, followed by Model, Insight, Encourage, and Challenge. All scores were above 8, on average. A moderately positive correlation was found between the five leadership practices and the “vigor” aspect of work engagement (r ranging from .43 to .63), while a weak to moderate positive correlation was found between “dedication” and the five leadership practices (r ranging from .22 to .49). For the work engagement dimension of “absorption” the correlations for Model and Challenge were weak ($r = .35$) and not statistically significant for the other three leadership practices.

For education, the only significant finding was that on Model the Way, CNOs scored higher if they had earned a doctoral degree compared to masters’ degrees. No significant relationships were found between the five leadership practices and years of experience as a CNO, or age (comparing those under 60 years of age with those older than 60 years).