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Social Support and Job Satisfaction among California Associate Degree Nursing Directors

There is a paucity of research at the Associate Degree Registered Nursing Program level and yet, in the state of California, 70% of all RN graduates initially practice with an Associate Nursing Degree. The state of California requires that all pre-licensure nursing programs have a Board of Registered Nursing program director to remain accredited. These positions generally are in two distinct classifications: (a) administrative dean, associate/assistant dean or administrative program director or (b) faculty level department chair or program director. With these classifications there are differences in job duties, reporting authority and responsibility. Over the last few years, there has been both an increase in position vacancies as well as lengthy posted, unfilled positions. The Personal Resource Questionnaire 2000 (Weinert, 2003) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985) were used in this study to measure the two primary variables of interest: social support and job satisfaction. Data were collected by survey at The California Organization of Associate Degree Registered Nursing Conference held in October, 2006. The response rate of 98.5% represented 80.5% of total Associate Degree Nursing Directors in the state. Of this total sample, 47 were in permanent positions and 15 were in interim positions. There was a trend toward a significant relationship between social support and job satisfaction. There was a significant difference on social support and job satisfaction measures based on position level (administrative or faculty) within the permanent group; those in faculty level positions had lower scores on both instruments. These findings lend support for the position to be at the administrative level. Implications for nursing education administration and recommendations for future research are included.