

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders among nurses in a tertiary referral hospital

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Background: Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are a major concern for nurses because of their health impacts and work productivity. Prevalence of MSDs among nurse is not well documented and has not been taken seriously in Thailand. This study aims to determine prevalence of MSDs and associated factors related to MSDs among nurses working in Rajavithi Hospital (RJH), a tertiary referral hospital in Bangkok, Thailand.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted in 485 nurses. Data were collected using the Standardized Nordic Questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I included socio-demographic data and part II contained information on work related MSDs, locations of MSDs over the previous 12 month periods and last 7 days on the nine body areas. Binary logistic regression was assessed the associations between variables and MSDs associated risk factors. The Ethics committees, Rajavithi hospital approved this study.

Results: The mean±SD of participant's ages was 40.5±11.1 years old. Most of them were female. The results revealed that 62.3% of nurses had MSDs problem at least one out of nine body parts in the past 12 months. The most prevalence of MSDs was found in shoulder (41.9%), followed by neck (33.8%) and low back (32.4%). Binary logistic regression analyses showed that lifting (OR 1.44, 95%CI 1.06-1.97) was strongly associated with MSDs (p=0.021).

Discussion: The prevalence of MSDs is consistent with the literature. For MSDs in shoulder, neck and low back, the association appeared with the index of long time working in static standing postures and improper neck postures. Lifting was a factor related to MSDs. Lifting patients in bed and lifting patients from the floor were the common activities of MSDs among nurses. These findings are consistent with previous reports indicating manual patient lifting, handling, transferring or moving as important predictors of MSDs among nurses.

Keywords: Musculoskeletal disorders, Hospital nurse, Occupational health, Work task-related factors, Work posture

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