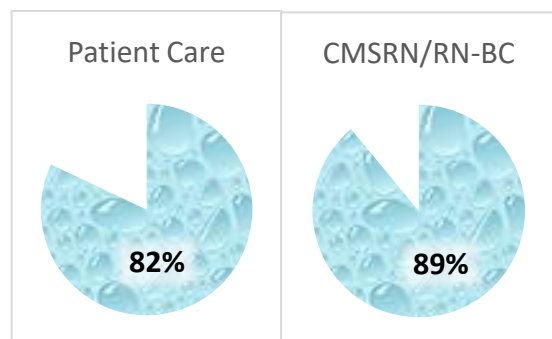


Overview

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Poll was sent on April 7, 2020 to get anecdotal information from AMSN members and CMSRNs on their day-to-day experiences with the pandemic. Invitations to take the poll were sent in an e-mail newsletter to AMSN members and on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. 85 responses were received between April 7 and April 15, 2020. Results of this poll are considered qualitative.

Demographics

Most respondents were CMSRNs or RN-BCs involved in patient care:

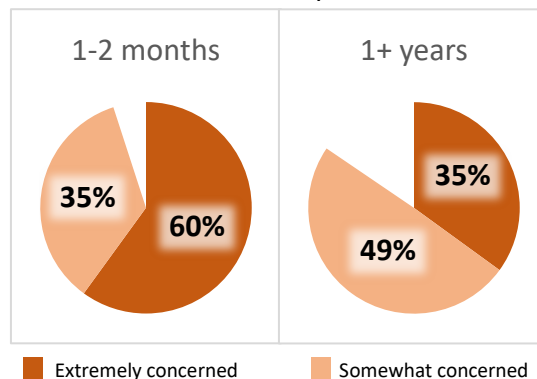


Respondents were from a total of 31 states. The highest number of responses came from California, Ohio, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

Overall Impact

When asked about the impact of COVID-19 on their practice over the next 1-2 months most respondents (95%) were either extremely or somewhat concerned. Over the next 1+ years, respondents' concern dropped but was still significant.

Concern for Overall Impact of COVID-19



When asked about the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and life in general in the next 1+ years, again, most respondents (96%) were either extremely or somewhat concerned.

Most respondents reported shortages in all areas of practice. Not surprisingly, the highest shortages were in masks and PPE (81%), hand sanitizers and other cleaners (59%), and COVID-19 tests (46%). One respondent noted that they were still waiting for their patient surge and had not yet experienced any shortages.

Impact in the Workplace

When asked about how the workplace has changed in response to COVID-19, the most prevalent changes were:

- Stopped or significantly reduced visitation hours (98%)
- Cancelled group activities (91%)
- Daily screening of staff for symptoms (85%)
- Social distancing (82%)

Over three-in-four respondents said they or someone they knew had been reassigned due to COVID-19.

The primary ways employers were supporting staff were through additional emotional support/counseling (54%) and providing childcare or childcare reimbursement (35%).

“PLEASE ALLOW ME TO FEEL PROTECTED WHILE CARING FOR OUR PATIENTS. MY LIFE MATTERS TOO.”

Some other ways employers were supporting staff were:

- Providing hotel rooms
- Allowing staff to use sick bank
- Cross training with other units in lieu of furlough or layoffs
- Allowing PTO to go negative and be paid back later

Unfortunately, several respondents said their employers are doing nothing to support them.

HOW EMPLOYERS ARE SUPPORTING MED-SURG NURSES DURING COVID-19

“[My hospital] is taking great care of their nurses....”

“Allowing staff to utilize their sick bank after 32 hours of PTO for low volume. Cross training nurses to other units in lieu of furlough or lay-offs for areas impacted by cancellation of surgeries and outpatient services....”

“Nothing. We are treated like cattle.”

What Med-Surg Nurses Would Ask of Their Employers

When we asked respondents “If you could make an anonymous request to your employer for one thing, what would that be?” their responses covered the full spectrum of nursing concerns in the field today...from PPE to hazard pay to better communications to more physical, emotional and financial support.

Selected comments were:

“Please allow me to feel protected while caring for our patients. My life matters too.”

“Change staffing ratios to account for

increased acuity in caring for COVID patients and PUIs v. standard Med/Surg patient acuity.”

“Options to feed staff at night.”

“Have the manager be more present on the floor for the staff.”

“I wish we got more respect from our leaders.”

The Advice Med-Surg Nurses Would Give Their Employers

There were many great pieces of advice med-surg nurses wished they could give to their employers. A few are shown here in response to the question “What 1-3 things would better prepare your organization for the next two months?”

- Consistent practices
- Looking at trends of admission, extubation and mortality
- PRACTICE, SIMULATIONS, and EDUCATION for intubation, extubation, transferring vented patients, and doffing PPE
- Think outside the box. Nothing is going to be the same again.
- Increase education in reality nursing.
- Action plan from administration after hearing from frontline workers.
- Good, honest communication [and] daily debriefing on status.
- More masks, kindness, and more patience among the staff.
- Continue collaboration with other hospitals, EMS, disaster preparedness.

Protocols Med-Surg Nurses are Following to Keep Themselves and Their Families Safe

Nurses told us of a number of different protocols they have put in place to keep themselves and

their family safe. Nearly two-in-three (63%) of nurses said these protocols were self-directed. Only about one-in-three (36%) said these protocols were from a combination of both their own knowledge and their employer's guidance.

- Consistent changing of and washing clothes, separate clothes storage
- Home quarantine/distancing
- Showering, hand washing
- Social distancing, wearing masks in public
- No touching of family
- Keeping work shoes separate
- Applying disinfectants to car/other surfaces
- Using delivery/pick up services for groceries
- Designated "Dirty Zone" for work clothes and shoes

"Please understand that COVID is serious.... Show compassion. Spread love. These characteristics are vital to humanity. Be smart. God bless."

Availability of Information from States

Almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) felt they were receiving adequate information on COVID-19 symptoms, prevention, and testing. Opinions on receiving information from the Federal government was not asked.

Final Comments

Some final comments respondents made to the survey included:

"To witness a COVID positive patient decline is one of the saddest moments of my life. It is something I will remember all my years.... I will never forget the impact of this pandemic."

"We must intervene earlier through testing and treating patients before they require a ventilator...."

"We were very poorly prepared for this.... We need proactive and preventative planning."

If Med-Surg Nurses Could Speak to the General Public about COVID-19, they would say...

"Please stay home."

"Be smart, think about what you are doing and we will be fine."

"When wearing gloves and masks in public understand what cross contamination is. You're just as safe with frequent hand hygiene than wearing gloves improperly."

"Follow social distancing and help flatten the curve."

"Don't hoard toilet paper, paper towels or flour."

"Wash your hands. Keep calm."

"Corporations: U.S. healthcare workers also need to be able to purchase awesome disinfectant sprays...so we can go back out there and fight another day."

"This is a long-haul process."

"Symptoms vary. Some people have no symptoms. How it is spreading is still unknown."

"Donate whatever you can."

"Follow the guidelines as we go through this together."

"Staying at home is working! Please keep it up!"

"Please understand that COVID is serious.... Show compassion. Spread love. These characteristics are vital to humanity. Be smart. God bless."