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### **RN Staffing and Workload, Dialysis Work Environment, Processes of Nursing Care and Patient Safety Culture in Outpatient Hemodialysis Facilities**

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**Aims:** Research has shown that registered nurse (RN) structures and workload, nursing processes of care, and work environments that support professional nursing practice are important for positive patient safety cultures in hospitals. The purpose of this analysis was to examine the extent to which nurse structures and workload, nursing care processes, and the dialysis work environment are associated with patient safety culture ratings by nurses in outpatient dialysis units.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional correlational, mailed survey design was used. The analytic sample consisted of 422 registered nurses who worked in outpatient dialysis facilities in the United States. Patient-to-RN ratios were computed based on nurses' responses to a series of staffing items. The Workload Scale of the Individual Workload Perception Scale was used to measure RN workload. The Practice Environment Scale was modified and used to measure nurses' perception of the dialysis work environment. The Handoff and Transitions and the Overall Patient Safety Grade scales of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) Hospital Patient Safety Survey were modified and used to measure patient safety culture variables in outpatient dialysis facilities.

**Results:** High RN workloads, negative ratings of the dialysis work environment, and missed nursing care independently predicted increased odds of negative ratings of handoffs and transitions safety during patient shift change. High RN workloads and negative ratings of the dialysis work environment also independently predicted increased odds of negative ratings of overall patient safety in dialysis units.

**Conclusion:** Findings from this analysis indicate that RN staffing, RN workload, nursing processes of care, and a work environment that is supportive of professional nursing practice is critically important for a positive patient safety culture in outpatient dialysis units.

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