

# Nursing Leaders' Role & Responsibility for Compassion Fatigue

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**Background:** Compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary trauma are current issues that have become relevant in the healthcare field. Prior to the COVID pandemic, 40 percent of nurses experienced compassion fatigue, and that number has risen to 70 percent in the last two years.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this presentation is to give nurse leaders tools to help nursing staff, and even other health professionals, to combat and prevent compassion fatigue.

**Methods:** A review of the literature was conducted exploring the signs, symptoms, treatment, and prevention of compassion fatigue regarding healthcare workers. The role of nurse leaders was considered during the review of prevention and treatment of compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary trauma. This was regarding providing staff with information on compassion fatigue, opportunities for self-care, along with leaders seeking out staff to understand their own experiences with compassion fatigue.

**Results/Conclusions:** Results from this literature review revealed that the leaders in these organizations can help prevent and treat compassion fatigue by: (1) creating a healthy work environment; (2) addressing burnout and compassion fatigue; and (3) providing staff with opportunities for self-care. These findings suggest that when nurse leaders take responsibility in the care of their staff, they not only impact those they lead, but also their organizations as a whole and the patients for which they care.