

# Prevalence of Compassion Fatigue Among Oncology Nurses

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## Abstract

### Objective

The aim of this project was to evaluate the prevalence of compassion fatigue among oncology nurses in a large health care system, across oncology settings. In addition this project evaluated staff awareness and use of current programs in place to reduce compassion fatigue and considered the effect of unit culture on staff resiliency.

### Method

Compassion fatigue screening was completed using the ProQOL-V screening tool in conjunction with a needs assessment. The needs assessment collected demographic data as well as information regarding available resources and key elements related to unit culture. Included were two large teaching hospitals, four rural critical access hospitals, two outpatient oncology infusion centers and two radiation oncology departments. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic and needs assessment data. The relationship between setting and compassion fatigue subscales were then analyzed looking at trends within the organization.

### Results

There were 100 surveys completed representing 55% of all oncology nurses in the organization. The inpatient medical oncology participants had statistically significant lower compassion satisfaction scores than their outpatient colleagues. This study provides evidence of a pervasive culture on oncology units that tolerates nurses regularly missing breaks. In addition, resources available to oncology staff were underutilized and many were not aware of available services.

### Conclusions

Insights from this study will be used to develop individualized and meaningful compassion fatigue resilience programs that are culturally sensitive and individualized to the needs of each unit.