

# Sule & Marušić. Nurse in a team: cross-sectional study of nurses' opinions on physician-nurse relationship - Appendix.

## Anonymous questionnaire

Split, March 2017

Thank you for participation in this survey.

The questionnaire is a part of research on attitudes of healthcare professionals on relationships within the medical teams. The questionnaire consists of general questions and questions specific for three examples of issues arising in medical team relations. Please read the questionnaire carefully and complete all the answers.

This survey is anonymous and the results will be presented collectively for the complete sample.

Thank you for your help,

Your colleague Zdenka Sule

### A) Participant information

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Years of professional experience? \_\_\_\_\_

Ward/Clinic/Department of employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Job position/responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed education** (circle your degree):

- a. vocational qualification (medical secondary school)
- b. Bachelor of Nursing
- c. Master's Degree in Nursing

**B) General questions** (mark with a cross your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 means "I completely disagree" and 10 means "I completely agree":)

The primary task of a nurse is to carry out the physician's orders.

I completely disagree | \_\_\_\_\_ | I completely agree

Treatment of patients is exclusively within the physician's domain of expertise and authority.

I completely disagree | \_\_\_\_\_ | I completely agree

Nurse has the same level of authority as other team members.

I completely disagree | \_\_\_\_\_ | I completely agree

Nurses are personally accountable for their work, responsible for their actions and omissions, regardless of advice or instructions from other experts.

I completely disagree | \_\_\_\_\_ | I completely agree

I usually do not share my opinion of the patient with the physician, as my opinion is irrelevant.

I completely disagree | \_\_\_\_\_ | I completely agree

Nurses in clinical practice should be physician's assistants, not associates or colleagues.

I completely disagree	_____	I completely agree
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As nurses acquire more professional experience, they more often decline the physician's orders which they consider not to be in the best interest of the patient.

I completely disagree	_____	I completely agree
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The primary duty of a nurse is to protect and support the patient's health.

I completely disagree	_____	I completely agree
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### C) THREE EXAMPLES

#### Example 1 – Knowledge

The clinic in this case example is located at two separate locations: A and B. Chief Physician at location A requested administration of medication 1, whereas Chief Physician at location B requested administration of medication 2. The issue arises when the Chief Physician from location A was on-call at the location B. During the on-call duty, a patient was received from the operating room. The physician requested administration of medication 1, although knowing that the medication was not available at the ward. The nurse had knowledge that the medication from another manufacturer was available, and suggested to the Chief Physician from location A to administer to the patient medication 2, which is typically used at location B and is available in stock. Chief Physician from location A decidedly refused this request, stating that he is on-call duty as the chief physician and ordering the nurse to administer the medication he had ordered. The nurse managed to find the medication 1 from another ward and administered the medication to the patient. The following day, after finding out what had happened, Chief Physician from location B verbally attacked the nurse, insulting her and calling her incompetent, threatening her with transfer or suspension. The nurse offered to pay the difference in price of medications from her own personal funds.

**Questions** (mark with a cross your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 means "not at all" and 10 means "completely"):

How unethical do you consider the events from this case example?

Not at all	_____	Completely
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How unethical do you consider the action of Chief Physician from location A?

Not at all	_____	Completely
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How unethical do you consider the action of Chief Physician from location B?

Not at all	_____	Completely
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How unethical do you consider actions of the nurse?

Not at all	_____	Completely
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The nurse in this case example suffered workplace abuse.

I completely disagree	_____	I completely agree
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The nurse should have refused the orders of the Chief Physician from location A to find and administer medication 1.

I completely disagree |-----| I completely agree

How strange do you find the fact that the Chief Physician from location A insistently prescribes one medication and the Chief Physician from location B another medication?

Not at all |-----| Very

What is your opinion of the described case example? (write in the box)

How would you solve the described case example? (write in the box)

Should the nurse have reported the incident?

- a) YES
- b) NO

If YES, to whom:

- a) head nurse of the clinic
- b) head nurse of the hospital
- c) hospital management
- d) noone

Do you consider similar cases a common occurrence in your working environment?

Not at all |-----| Very common

How compliant are nurses towards physicians, even if they know that the physician's request is scientifically unsubstantiated or potentially unjustified?

Not at all |-----| Completely

Do you agree with the following statement: pharmaceutical companies provide certain material benefits also to nurses, to promote using the medications the companies manufacture?

Not at all |-----| Completely

How often do you administer to the patient inappropriate medication or dosage of medication which was recorded in the medication chart by the physician?

Never |-----| Frequently

How often do you carry out an order given by the physician, although you knew that the order was probably wrong?

Never |-----| Frequently

How often are you being called incompetent because you refused to administer a medication which was prescribed on the phone?

Never |-----| Frequently

How often do you act beyond your level of competence and at the level of competence of a physician?

Never |-----| Frequently

What is your opinion of the described case example? (write in the box)

How would you solve the described case example? (write in the box)

**Example 2 – Experience**

Patient Jane Doe in postoperative treatment, after thoracic surgery, suffered a severe infection of sternum, accompanied by bone defect. This type of complication requires application of vacuum assisted closure therapy (VAC), with fast and successful results in wound treatment; however the procedure is costly and requires knowledge and expertise. During the postoperative treatment, frequency of dressing changes should have been 2-3 times a week, but the schedule was changed due to emergency cases and elective surgeries. The complications of surgical wound occurred, resulting in life-threatening condition. After two months, nurse XY, with considerable experience in treating severe chronic wounds, worried about the serious health condition of the patient and dissatisfied with the treatments the patient was receiving, warned the responsible physician about the patient’s health condition and the omissions done in the dressing changes schedule. The responsible physician responded with the following comment: “You should know your place, you are not a doctor.” The nurse replied that she would inform the head nurse of the case, as well as the clinic Chief Physician. The responsible physician presented the case at the meeting of college of physicians, also “taking credit for detecting the issue”. After the case was treated successfully and the patient was released, the Chief Physician insisted that in the future the dressing changes schedule must be followed.

**Questions** (mark with a cross your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 means “not at all” and 10 means “completely”):

How unethical do you consider the events from this case example?

Not at all |-----| Completely

Do you agree with the statement that the nurse should have immediately report to the responsible persons the mistreatment of a patient in severe condition?

I completely disagree |-----| I completely agree

How insulting do you find the response (comment) of the physician, after the nurse had warned him of severe condition of the patient?

Not at all |-----| Completely

In your experience, how common are the cases of disregarding the treatment schedule of seriously-ill patients in order to give priority to “more important” patients?

Never |-----| Frequent

How often were you in a situation that the physician raised their voice (i.e. shouted) at you because you gave your opinion on the case, although they insisted to be right?

Never |-----| Frequently

How often were you in a situation that you are asked for your professional opinion at joint meetings of nurses and physicians?

Never |-----| Frequently

How dissatisfied are you with lack of participation at such meetings?

Not at all |-----| Completely

If the physician tells you one time “You do not have a doctor of medicine degree to do this!” – is this enough for you to never again try to suggest anything to a physician?

I completely disagree |-----| I completely agree

Do you consider that nurses, regardless of the level of education, have the right to intervene in (similar) situations if they recognise substandard treatment by other members of a medical team?

I completely disagree |-----| I completely agree

Do you consider that the term “doctor-nurse game”, i.e. subtle conveying of information to the physician without questioning his authority can improve the very complicated and sometimes disharmonious relationship between nurses and physicians?

I completely disagree |-----| I completely agree

What is your opinion of the described case example? (write in the box)

How would you solve the described case example? (write in the box)

### Example 3 – Conviction

Physicians and nurses in Croatia have a right to invoke conscientious objection in cases where their religious beliefs prevent them to participate in medical procedures which are contrary to religious postulates. No person,

hospital or institution shall be coerced, held liable or discriminated against in any manner because of a refusal to perform, accommodate, assist or submit to an abortion, the performance of a human miscarriage, or euthanasia or any act which could cause the death of a human foetus or embryo, for any reason (Resolution 1763(2010), The right to conscientious objection in lawful medical care). The case of a midwife from Knin, who was dismissed from work because she invoked her right to conscientious objection and refused to participate in abortion procedure raised questions on who has the right to conscientious objection in performing work tasks. The midwife sought help from a number of different bodies, from the chamber to the Nurses' Union, but with no response. She also turned to former hospital manager, but he did not show much understanding – moreover, at one meeting he openly sided with the physician, who said that J.S. could have chosen another profession, such as hairdressing or cooking, if she was not ready to participate in abortion procedures. Subsequently, J.S. informed the media of the case, and the public debate lasted for days, but no final conclusion was reached. J.S. stated that she will not give up and that she has the right to conscientious objection, just like physicians and nurses. She also stated that if necessary she will bring her case to the European Court of Human Rights.

**Questions** (mark with a cross your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 10, where 0 means “not at all” and 10 means “completely”):

Do you consider that a number of similar cases occur in practice, but the public has no knowledge of them?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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How often were you in a situation to carry out a procedure which was contrary to your convictions?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you consider that religious and/or moral convictions should have priority over professional tasks of nurses?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you consider that, in a way, conscientious objection exposes a person to stigmatization or discrimination?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you consider that the actions of contacted bodies (hospital management, Nurses' Union, etc.) were unethical?

Not at all		Completely
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Do you agree with the statement that midwife J.S. acted unprofessionally?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you consider that if midwife J.S. had a written record of her religious belief she would have been exempted from performing abortions and similar medical procedures?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you agree with the comment the physician made on the actions of midwife J.S.?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Do you agree that the European Court of Human Rights will uphold J.S.'s position?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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Would you personally agree to participate in a medical procedure (physician-assisted death, in vitro fertilisation, sterilization) which may be medically justified but against your fundamental beliefs?

I completely disagree		I completely agree
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What is your opinion of the described case example? (write in the box)

How would you solve the described case example? (write in the box)

**Self-esteem Scale**

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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2. At times I think I am no good at all.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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6. I certainly feel useless at times

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
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