



Self-Reflection, Burnout Prevention, and Well-Being in Nurses: About the Keener Shift Reflection

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The Problem: Nurse Well-Being Support

The growing mental health crisis for nurses and other clinicians is becoming increasingly urgent as COVID-19 impacts patient acuity, access to care, nursing staffing models, and clinician safety. Health policy researchers and nursing organizations are recognizing nurse well-being as a critical issue not only for health professionals, but also for national healthcare quality and safety (Dzau, Kirch & Nasca, 2018; Melnyk, 2020).

In September 2020, a national survey of nurses was implemented through the NurseGrid mobile app (n = 12,071). The results of this survey, published as "[Nurse Well-Being at Risk](#)," indicate that nurses in the U.S. struggle with personal self-care while prioritizing patient care and safety ahead of their own. Forty-one percent of nurses surveyed rated their career fulfillment highly, yet just 28% scored their personal well-being high. Moreover, the best predictors of well-being among nurses were identified as:

- Routinely practicing self-care
- The ability to manage feelings of burnout
- The ability to decompress after work
- The ability to manage work-related stress and anxiety
- Maintaining a healthy diet
- Having healthy sleep habits.

Even prior to the pandemic, poor clinician well-being was recognized as a public health threat. In 2017, an Action Collaborative was convened by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) to address the issue. The NAM Action Collaborative implemented a consensus study, which generated evidence-based recommendations for healthcare systems to use in eliminating clinician burnout and enhancing professional well-being. Organized into a [knowledge hub](#), these best practices include:

1. Creating positive work environments
2. Creating positive learning environments
3. Reducing administrative burden
4. Enabling technology solutions
5. Providing support to clinicians and learners
6. Investing in research on clinical professional well-being (National Academy of Medicine, 2019).

This research suggests that approaches to improve the safety and well-being of nurses must include individual approaches that nurses can employ on their own, alongside organizational and systemic transformation. Both an individual and organizational approach are necessary.

The Keener app – and the Shift Reflection tool within it – were designed to provide structured individual support for nurses as they manage the complex personal challenges inherent in their work. The Keener app is designed based on evidence and nursing theory that support individual self-reflection as an important aspect for self-care, personal and professional growth, and nurse well-being. Specifically, the Keener app addresses

recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 5 from the NAM Action Collaborative and builds on the evidence provided by the NurseGrid national survey.

The Solution: Individualized Approach to Well-Being via the Keener Shift Reflection

The Keener app's Shift Reflection tool -- available for any nurse at no cost -- is designed to guide individual nurses through a private, secure, self-reflection process that:

- Highlights the connections between self-reflection and personal growth, professional development, whole-person well-being, and resilience
- Emphasizes the importance of consistently observing, reflecting, and growing as part of overall well-being
- Places the nurse in the "driver's seat" for observing and evaluating their emotions, overall experience of their shifts, professional challenges and accomplishments, and their cognitive/emotional responses over time
- Guides nurses in the process of exploring the challenges and accomplishments they have experienced each shift
- Provides a platform for nurses to focus on the things about their work experience they can control
- Supplies a way for nurses to identify, name and rate the intensity of their emotions
- Equips nurses with practical, evidence-based approaches to self-reflection and professional growth
- Gives nurses space for journaling about their experiences with gratitude, resilience, confidence, and mindfulness
- Provides a way for nurses to use technology to promote growth and well-being
- Links nurses to supporting content for continued learning
- Supports nurses in identifying trends in their responses over time
- Ensures that reflection data is private to nurses
- Enables aggregate data trends across nurse populations about their emotions, challenges, and successes — but through de-identified reporting. (All personal comments are private and secure in order to give nurses a "safe space" to reflect openly.)

Shift Reflection Implementation Details

The Shift Reflection is designed with the goal of attuning to the individual nurse's needs so they will use the app consistently, regularly, and with fidelity. Ideally, nurses use the app as they are transitioning from a shift to off-duty or soon after, so the memory of the shift is still fresh. The app provides a way for nurses to quickly rate their shift, identify their greatest challenges, identify their emotions, gain insight, and strengthen their resilience. Human-centered design principles were used to guide the development so that the user interface is engaging and efficient. Above all, the priority was creating an individual tool that nurses would use consistently and benefit from immediately.

To be clear, the Shift Reflection is intentionally designed not to be an "employee satisfaction survey." Rather, it was designed to give nurses a consistent way to reflect internally. It helps them evaluate their well-being — naturally influenced heavily by their environment — without focusing on environmental issues outside their control.

Summary:

The Keener app and its included Shift Reflection tool is designed to provide nurses with a convenient, engaging, and systematic way of reflecting regularly. The purpose of this self-reflection is enhancing personal and professional well-being, resilience, and growth as it relates to a nurse's career and practice. The app provides a private way for nurses to explore patterns in their responses, gain valuable insights, learn relevant and inspiring

self-care strategies, and become stronger and more resilient in their careers and lives.

About the Author:

Teri Pipe (Ph.D, R.N.) is Arizona State University's Chief Well-Being Officer and served as the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation at Arizona State University (ASU) from 2011-2018. She also is the founding director of ASU's Center for Mindfulness, Compassion and Resilience. Before coming to ASU in 2011, Professor Pipe served as director of Nursing Research and Innovation at Mayo Clinic Arizona and was an associate professor of nursing at the Mayo Clinic's College of Medicine. In 2014 she was selected as a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellow.