A conceptual model for improving the working conditions in selected public hospitals at a specific province in South Africa.

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ABSTRACT:

Employees in public hospitals in South Africa work under appalling conditions and are at risk of developing psychological stress and occupational diseases as well as occupational injuries. These poor working conditions translate to poor service delivery and as a result, patients are the ones who suffer the most while under the care of these health care professionals. Despite these poor working conditions in public hospitals, there are limited studies that have addressed this important topic in South Africa.

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to construct and describe a conceptual model to be used as a framework of reference to improve the working conditions in selected public hospitals in as pecific province in South Africa, for quality service delivery.

Research design and methods: A model construction research design was used to construct a conceptual model for improving the working conditions in public hospitals in the specific province in South Africa. Construction of the model was guided b Chinn and Krammers' (2012) model of theory development and the Dickoff, James and Wiedenbach's (1968) survey list. Construction of the conceptual model was facilitated by the findings of an empirical study which explored and described hospital employees' perspectives on the status of working conditions in the selected province.

Findings: The study suggests that improvement can only be achieved if employees and managers work interdependently for the betterment of the working conditions of their hospitals. Improvement should focus on enablers such as leadership commitment, infrastructure, resources, safety and security communications, decision making, interpersonal relationships, support and education and training.

Key words: conceptual model, improve, working conditions, public hospital