

Nurses' job satisfaction well below average

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At a time of growing tensions in the nursing industry, a national survey has shown that poor job satisfaction and a lack of trust in management are widespread in the workforce.

[The survey](#) (PDF, 624 kb), released last week by Monash University researchers, Associate Professor Peter Holland, Dr. Brian Cooper and Dr. Belinda Allen from the Department of Management, comes as Victorian [nurses](#) renew their industrial action with the government over the ratio of registered nurses on wards.

"The research highlights there are serious underlying problems in the nursing profession," Associate Professor Holland said.

"You would expect the [job satisfaction](#) of nurses would be relatively high, as they require high skill and choose a profession seen as a vocation. We were really surprised by the results.

"When we compared the survey results with those of the Monash-based Australian Worker Representation and Participation Survey, we found nurses reported significantly lower levels of influence in their workplace, trust in management, skill development, and lower satisfaction with pay and conditions compared to the national average."

Even when nurses thought management showed an understanding of circumstances, such as family responsibilities, their responses still compared unfavourably with those of the general [workforce](#).

Another major concern highlighted was the unwillingness of management to share power and authority, with only 21 per cent of nurses indicating that management did a good or excellent job in this area compared to 42 per cent in the broader working population.

Dr. Allen said the results showed that there was a widespread perception amongst nurses that they are undervalued and lack the recognition they deserve as health care professionals.

"Add to this that nurses are seriously stressed and unhappy with work, their workplace and their managers, many are intent on leaving the profession in the next year and there is cause for serious concern," Dr. Allen said.

"Unless steps are taken by government to improve the working conditions, problems in relations to recruitment and retention will only worsen."

Provided by Monash University

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