

**NURSE MANAGERS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING COST CONTAINMENT IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS
IN THE PORT ELIZABETH METROPOLE**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

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PROMOTER: PROF SW BOOYENS

JOINT PROMOTER: DR VJ EHLERS

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I declare that NURSE MANAGERS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS REGARDING COST CONTAINMENT IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN THE PORT ELIZABETH METROPOLE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other university.

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SIGNATURE
(MS ET NTLABEZO)

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DATE

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Summary

This study investigated the attitudes and perceptions of nurse managers regarding cost containment issues in selected public hospitals in the Port Elizabeth metropole of the Eastern Cape. Four hospitals participated in the study, and 211 nurse managers completed questionnaires. The results obtained from the participants' responses indicated that:

- ◆ Nurse managers are ill-prepared for many responsibilities regarding cost containment, and need appropriate orientation and preparation both during their initial formal, and during their nurse management and in service training in order to fulfil their "financial" or cost containment role more effectively.
- ◆ Nurse managers perceived the relationship between the productivity of staff and cost containment positively, but were reportedly unable to
 - prevent nurses from leaving their points of duty
 - curb the rate of absenteeism among nurses
 - reduce the number of resignations
- ◆ Nurse managers suggested that more effective hospital cost containment efforts should ensure that
 - effective security checks are performed to curb losses of stock and equipment
 - more public telephones are installed in hospitals
 - stricter controls regarding wheelchairs are implemented

The rationalisation of staff and services, as well as specialised equipment among the four public hospitals could enhance these hospitals' cost containment results. However, this would necessitate reorganising these hospitals' services at provincial level.

The nurse managers required more knowledge about hospitals' financial management and cost containment issues. Guidelines for such a course were developed addressing: analysis of monthly variance reports; budgeting for manpower; balance statement; calculations for the supplies and expenses budget; income statements; the hospital's budgetary cycle; break-even analysis; analysis of cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis.

KEY CONCEPTS

Analysis of monthly variance, budgeting, cost containment, cost unit, financial escalation, financial

resources, fiscal accountability, health care costs, hospital management, nurse manager, role model.

This study is dedicated to my beloved parents, Phillip and Sarah-Mina Ngovo, who are no longer part of this world. They taught me the value of education and I will forever be indebted to them for what I have achieved in my life time.

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