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Abstract, Examining Barriers to Nurse Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse: An Integrative Literature Review

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Abstract

**Background:** Child abuse is a serious and far-reaching issue with effects negatively influencing development across the lifespan. Intervention of child protective services is a significant component to mitigating abuse and assuring the well-being of children at risk for or experiencing abuse.

**Objectives:** The purpose of this integrative literature review was to identify barriers nurses as front-line workers may encounter when identifying child abuse, may experience when completing child abuse reporting measures, and to explore potential action measures for reduction in the identified reporting barriers.

**Method:** This integrative literature review was conducted utilizing the key terms child, abuse, maltreatment, nurse, mandatory, mandated, report, and reporting to search the literature between the years 2008 and 2018 in the PubMed database in the English language. The keywords were then refined to a combination of child abuse or child maltreatment and mandatory and nurse and reporting to search the literature between the years 2008 and 2018. The refined combination of terms were applied to subsequent searches of the databases PubMed, CINAHL Complete, and ProQuest Nursing & Allied Health Source between the years of 2008 and 2018 in the English language. In total, 9 articles were selected across the three databases for ultimate use in this integrative literature review.

**Results:** Four major inhibitory factors to reporting of child abuse were identified within the literature: nurse perception of inadequacy of training, lack of trust, deferred responsibility, and impact on nurse-patient relationship.

**Conclusions:** Current research identified four themes reported by nurses which may cause distress to the nurse faced with suspected child abuse reporting, adversely affecting completion of the reporting process. An underlying theme of the barriers was a perceived lack of proper preparation in handling and reporting child abuse cases, therefore, there is a need for development of training specific to nurse reporters when encountering cases of child abuse.

**Key Words:** Child, abuse, neglect, mandated, nurse reporting, barriers to child abuse reporting, child abuse training