

# New Graduate Nurses' Experiences With and Perceptions of Their Mental Health and Well-being During the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Interpretive Descriptive Study

FINAL REPORT



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## Executive Summary

This is the executive summary report of an interpretive description study of new graduate nurses' experiences with and perceptions of their mental health and well-being as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in Newfoundland and Labrador. This study was conducted between Oct 2022 and March 2024 by the Faculty of Nursing and in collaboration with the Office of Professional Educational Development (OPED), Faculty of Medicine at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Funding to complete this project was received from The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WorkplaceNL).

### **Research Question and Objectives:**

#### **The overarching question that guided this research project was:**

How do new graduate nurses' experience and perceive their mental health and well-being as they transition to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)?

#### **The research objectives were as follows:**

1. To describe new graduate nurses' experiences and perceptions of their mental health and well-being as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To describe new graduate nurses' awareness and use of supportive resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. To identify strategies and resources to support new graduate nurses' mental health and well-being as they transition to practice and during a public health crisis.

The following methods were used to collect information and data in this study from Oct 2022 and Dec 2023:

- A literature review, and
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with new graduate nurses<sup>1</sup>.

## Background and Key Findings

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted life around the world and resulted in significant concerns for the physical and mental well-being of those responsible for providing care. Workers experiencing mental health challenges in the workplace can have a negative impact on absenteeism, attrition, and patient safety (Badu et al., 2020; Cavanagh et al., 2020; Cimiotti et al., 2012; Huhtala et al., 2021).

Health care professionals such as Registered Nurses (RNs) found they experienced feelings of loss, a lack of socialization, fear of becoming infected or infecting others, and the need to constantly adapt (Garcia-

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<sup>1</sup> Registered nurses who have graduated from an accredited nursing program and are in their first two years of nursing practice.

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Martin et al., 2020; Kang et al., 2020). New graduate nurses (NGNs) were particularly vulnerable given the additional pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic as they transitioned to their first years of practice (Duchscher, 2008; Dyess & Sherman, 2009; Kramer, 1974). NGNs played an important role during the COVID-19 pandemic and were often called upon to fill critical gaps in staffing. An understanding of the mental health and well-being of NGNs during a time of public health crisis is needed to ensure appropriate supports are in place to support and protect novice nurses entering the health care workforce.

Findings from the literature review completed as part of this study indicate NGNs experienced unique stressors as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. The mandatory cessation or switch to simulated clinical experiences left NGNs feeling unprepared and unconfident as they lacked hands-on experience and had little experience with infectious disease or caring for the critically ill and dying (Bultas & L'Ecuyer, 2022; Glover et al., 2022; Kaisla, 2022; Sherman & Labat, 2021). Amplifying these stressors was a lack of adequate orientation or mentorship and insufficient staffing (Kaisla, 2022). NGNs struggled to adapt to new roles, heavy workloads, constantly changing COVID-19 protocols, the use of personal protective equipment, and the cumulative impact of the aforementioned struggles on patient care (Blanco et al., 2023; Kaisla, 2022). As a result, many NGNs were described to be overwhelmed, stressed, anxious and fearful about harming patients or infecting friends and family members (Carnesten et al., 2021; Kovanci & Ozbas, 2021; McMillian et al., 2023; Savin, 2021). Coping strategies employed by NGNs ranged from self-care, including setting boundaries and personal reflection (McMillian et al., 2023) to overeating and drinking (Kaisla, 2022; Savin, 2021; Sessions et al., 2021).

Noted recommendations in the literature to reduce the general stressors experienced by NGNs were directed to educational institutions, healthcare organizations and NGNs. Recommendations aimed at educational institutions included planning for the professional transition of students and adding course content focused on pandemic training, caring for the critically ill, and psychological wellness (Bani, et al., 2022; Schivinski & McNulty, 2021; Suplee et al., 2022). Organizational recommendations included ensuring strong nursing leadership, positive learning environments, and adequate orientation and mentorship with ongoing transition monitoring to support NGNs during times of crisis (Fernandez-Basanta et al., 2022). Nurse residency and transition to practice programs were also recommended for organizations hiring NGNs as they were noted to help ameliorate the transition to practice experience (Broussard, 2023; Grubaugh et al., 2023; Gallagher & Kopp, 2022).

Although there were many recommended approaches to reduce the general transition stressors experienced by NGNs, there were fewer offered to support their mental health and well-being. Suggested approaches included hiring organizations to provide stress management training, resiliency training or journaling, counselling services, and the creation of trauma informed wellness programs; however, several of these supports were offered to both NGNs and experienced RNs and not specifically tailored to the NGN experience (Casella, et al., 2023; Naylor et al., 2021). They also required additional work, time or engagement of the NGN which could be perceived as an additional stressor. Findings

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indicate initiatives specifically targeting NGNs and their psychological well-being without adding to their workload are needed (Schivinski & McNulty, 2021).

The analysis of data collected from interviews conducted as part of this study highlighted four main themes, as well as recommendations for supports and resources. The four main themes included: “That’s all I knew”, Stressors and Supports, A Balancing Act, and The Lingering Effects of COVID-19.

**“That’s all I Knew”.** NGNs described an inability to compare themselves and their transition experience with other cohorts of NGNs, as the circumstances surrounding their transition were perceived to be unique. Never having the experience of working as an RN outside of the COVID-19 pandemic was described as both a benefit and a hindrance, as they felt they did not have as big of an adjustment to make in terms of their practice as compared with their more experienced colleagues. However, they were not able to experience what they perceived to be the ‘normal’ transition to practice experience of a NGN and that came with a sense of loss.

**Stressors and Supports.** NGNs described the stressors they encountered which included, but were not limited to, mandated overtime, continuously changing policies and procedures, and the fear of becoming infected or infecting others. NGNs expressed limited knowledge of organizational supports and relied on existing external supports and self-care routines to support their well-being.

**A Balancing Act.** Balancing the pressures experienced at work with the need for self-care was an ongoing challenge for NGNs. NGNs described mental health supports both at work and in their personal realm that ebbed and flowed in terms of availability due to external mandates or staffing pressures. For example, those who worked out at the gym to manage their stress were unable to do so during periods of lockdown. Similarly, when gaps in staffing increased with rates of infection, peer supports that were normally available to them were no longer present.

**The Lingering Effects of COVID-19.** NGNs shared what they have perceived as the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the stressors and subsequent emotional and psychological impact on NGNs in this study resulted in some leaving their position or the profession entirely. Others found their pandemic experiences to be motivating and resulted in a desire to enter graduate studies to enable them to increase their scope and ability to provide care.

There were several commonalities noted between the findings and recommendations in the literature and those resulting from the interviews. Similar to the literature, recommendations were aimed at the academic institutions preparing NGNs for practice, the organizations hiring NGNs into their first nursing positions, as well as the NGNs themselves. These included suggestions such as pandemic preparation at the undergraduate level and continuation of clinical experiences, continuation of in-person orientation and mentorship programs upon hire, and self-care practices for NGNs. Unique recommendations resulting from the analysis of the data collected from the interview were the suggestion for academic institutions to reassure students of the quality of their education during times of major shifts in processes, and for academic and organizations hiring NGNs to maintain open dialogue regarding changes in usual practice to ensure any gaps in clinical experience is shared to support NGNs safe

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transition to practice. Additionally, alterations to existing processes and supports such as debriefings, mentorship, and psychological services were recommended.

Findings from this study indicate resources tailored to the NGN experience are required at multiple levels to support the mental health and well-being of new registered nurses entering the healthcare workforce during a public health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on healthcare systems around the world and the essential workers who provide care. Mental health is an important aspect to be considered when evaluating the health and safety of workers and in workplaces. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and well-being of healthcare workers (HCWs) have only begun to be understood (Garcia-Martin et al., 2020; Tokac & Razon, 2020). Unmanaged mental health challenges in the workplace can have a negative impact on the overall safety of workers including: absenteeism, attrition, and patient safety issues (Badu et al., 2020; Cavanagh et al., 2020; Cimiotti et al., 2012; Huhtala et al., 2021).

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic RNs have played a vital role in protecting the health and safety of individual patients, the public and our healthcare systems. However, healthcare workplaces are high stress environments placing care providers such as RNs at high risk for occupational stress injuries related to poor mental health (Mooney et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Organizations at all levels have begun to recognize that the implications of these environments on the mental health of RNs bringing their psychological safety in the workplace into question (ICN, 2021; Kirwan, 2013; WHO, 2020). Alarming statistics of the current and projected status of RNs' mental health and the subsequent impact on our healthcare systems and workplaces have been reported (Danielis et al., 2020; Davis et al., 2021; Guille, 2021; ICN, 2021). Mass attrition and staffing shortages are predicted as a result of the negative impact on RNs mental health and well-being (ICN, 2021; Kelly, Gee, & Butler, 2021). Evidence from past pandemics such as SARS, MERS, H5N1 and H1N1 have provided information on the impact on healthcare workers, but few solutions have been offered to support future generations facing similar public health emergencies (Fernandez et al., 2020). During the current COVID-19 pandemic, NGNs have been relied upon to fill critical staffing shortages and provide care to acute patient populations while existing supportive resources such as mentoring programs have been paused (Henshall et al., 2020). New healthcare professionals such as NGNs are known to be especially vulnerable to workplace illnesses such as occupational stress injuries and the current pandemic has further increased this risk (Tokac & Razon, 2020).

Of concern is the mental health and well-being of NGNs; registered nurses (RNs) who have graduated from an accredited nursing program and are in their first two years of nursing practice. NGNs are known to face specific challenges during their first years of practice and are therefore particularly vulnerable when the added stressors of a pandemic are taken into consideration (Duchscher, 2008; Dyess & Sherman, 2009; Kramer, 1974, Tokac & Razon, 2020). With the healthcare workforce continuing to be under unprecedented pressure during the COVID-19 pandemic, NGNs have been called upon to fill gaps in staffing and have played an important role in the provision of care. With 26-57% of NGNs being reported as leaving their first positions or the professional entirely before the pandemic (Zhang et al., 2019), protecting those providing care in a public health crisis is a key factor in protecting individual patients and the community at large. Research was required to understand the experiences of NGNs as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic and the supportive resources that they required to build and maintain their mental health and well-being in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL).



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The goal of this study was to understand NGNs' experiences with and perceptions of their mental health and well-being as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in NL.

Interviews were conducted with NGNs in their first two years of practice working in NL. Analysis of the interview findings provided insight into the experiences and perceptions of NGNs' mental health and well-being, identified awareness and use of current resources, as well as identified strategies and resources to support current and future new graduate nurses' mental health and well-being transitioning to nursing practice during a public health crisis.

### **Research Question and Objectives:**

#### **The overarching question that guided this research project was:**

How do new graduate nurses' experience and perceive their mental health and well-being as they transition to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in NL?

#### **The research objectives were as follows:**

1. To describe new graduate nurses' experiences and perceptions of their mental health and well-being as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To describe new graduate nurses' awareness and use of supportive resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. To identify strategies and resources to support new graduate nurses' mental health and well-being as they transition to practice and during a public health crisis.

## **2.0 Methodology**

A review of the literature and interpretive description studies were completed as part of this project. The following methods were used for each of the two methodologies.

### **2.1 Literature Review**

A review of the literature was conducted using the JBI methodology for scoping reviews as a guide. The aim of which was to determine what was known about the mental health and well-being of NGNs during an epidemic or pandemic. A search of peer-reviewed and grey literature was conducted twice between Oct 2022 and Dec 2023 using a search strategy developed by a librarian (MS) and in collaboration with the research team. In alignment with JBI scoping review protocols, a Population, Concept, Context (PCC) approach was taken to guide this search. The following terms and associated variations of each category were used in the search:

- **Population:** MH "New Graduate Nurses" OR MH "Novice Nurses"
- **Concept:** MH "Mental Health" OR MH "Psychological Well-Being" OR MH "Mental Disorders" OR MH "Adjustment Disorders" OR MH "Depression" OR MH "Depression, Reactive" OR MH

"Dysthymic Disorder" OR MH "Anxiety Disorders" OR MH "Generalized Anxiety Disorder" OR MH "Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder" OR MH "Panic Disorder" OR MH "Social Anxiety Disorders" OR MH "Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic" OR MH "Psychological Trauma" OR MH "Substance Use Disorders" OR MH "Substance Abuse" OR MH "Alcohol-Related Disorders" OR MH "Alcohol Abuse" OR MH "Binge Drinking" OR MH "Alcoholism" OR MH "Inhalant Abuse" OR MH "Substance Abuse, Intravenous" OR MH "Substance Dependence" OR MH "Smoking" OR MH "Vaping" OR MH "Insomnia" OR MH "Sleep Disorders" OR MH "Burnout, Professional" OR MH "Compassion Fatigue" OR MH "Stress, Occupational" OR MH "Stress, Psychological" OR MH "Hardiness" OR MH "Coping" OR MW "PF" OR MH "Support, Social" OR MH "Support, Psychosocial"

- **Context:** MH "Disease Outbreaks" OR MH "Disease Hotspot" OR MH "Influenza, Pandemic (H1N1) 2009" OR MH "Influenza A Virus, H1N1 Subtype" OR MH "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome" OR MH "SARS-CoV-2" OR MH "COVID-19" OR MH "COVID-19 Pandemic" OR MH "Hemorrhagic Fever, Ebola" OR MH "Ebola Virus"

A total of 519 articles were found in the search of the literature of which twelve were found through a search of the grey literature. After completing the title and abstract screening in Covidence, 118 full text manuscripts were reviewed.

Documents were excluded for the following reasons:

- Wrong Population
- Wrong Concept
- Wrong Context

A total of 32 documents were included in this review. The abstracts and sources of included documents are offered in Appendix A.

## 2.2 New Graduate Nurse Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with NGNs who worked in any practice setting in the Provincial Health Authority in NL, Canada. A purposeful, maximum variation approach to sampling was taken (Sandelowski, 1995; Coyne, 1997). An interview guide (Appendix B) was developed by members of the research team and focused on new graduate nurses' mental health and well-being, transition to practice experiences, as well as available and recommended supports and resources.

Registered nurses who had: 1) graduated from a Canadian nursing program between 2020 and 2022; and 2) worked as a RN in NL were eligible for this study. Newly registered nurse practitioners and NGNs who only worked as an RN outside of NL were excluded from this study. Recruitment of study participants took place between Oct 2022 and Dec 2023. The study was promoted through a variety of methods including emails sent to eligible participants, public service announcements on local radio stations, and on social media. Registered nurses who are interested in participating in the study were

asked to notify the study lead or research assistant who arranged an interview time and method that was convenient for the participant. Recruitment of participants ceased when sufficient information to address the research question was reached (Francis et al., 2010). A total of twenty five RNs expressed interest in participating. One was excluded as they had not worked as an RN in NL and fifteen consented to an interview.

All interviews were conducted by phone and each lasted approximately one hour. Consent forms were emailed to participants after they expressed interest participating in the study. Consent was obtained by interviewer (study lead or research assistant). Participants had the opportunity to review the content of the form with the interviewer and have any questions answered before providing consent and commencing the interview. Each interview was audio recorded, de-identified and given a unique code to protect the confidentiality of the participant while maintaining an audit trail. Audio recordings of the interviews were destroyed once each had been de-identified, coded, transcribed and verified. Data collection ceased when sufficient information had been collected to address the research question (Francis et al., 2010).

Qualitative analysis of the interviews were be conducted using Braun & Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis. Themes were identified using their six-step process: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Two members of the research team independently familiarized themselves with the data and generated initial codes and themes. The two reviewers then met to compare results, review and finalize themes. The results were then audited by two other members of the team. The analysis of demographic data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel version 2018 and presented in a table (Figure 1).

Ethics approval was obtained from the NL Health Research Ethics Board (HREB #20230223) before commencing this study.

## **3.0 Findings**

### **3.1 Literature Review**

The review of the literature conducted using the aforementioned procedure, resulted in 32 articles that met the inclusion criteria. The included articles were published between 2018 and 2023. Manuscripts represented a variety of countries including 20 articles from the United States (Blanco et al., 2023; Broussard, 2023; Bultas & L'Ecuyer, 2022; Casey et al., 2021; Druse, 2022; Feeg et al., 2022; Gallagher & Kopp, 2022; Glover et al., 2022; Grubaugh et al., 2023; Horan & Dimino, 2020; Kosturko, 2022; Naylor et al., 2021; Repsha, 2021; Schivinski & McNulty, 2020; Sessions et al., 2021; Sherman & Labat, 2021; Smith et al., 2021; Stolzman, 2022; Suplee et al., 2022; Urban et al., 2022), 2 from Italy (Bani et al., 2023; Casella et al., 2023), 2 from China (Cao et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2023), 1 from Australia (Fernández-Basanta et al., 2022), the United Kingdom (Godbold et al., 2022), South Korea (Ji, & Lee, 2021), Sweden/Norway (Carnesten et al., 2022), and Turkey (Kovanci, & Özbas, 2022) respectively. One literature review summarized information from the United States, Canada, Spain, and Turkey. Only 2

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studies were conducted in Canada (McMillian et al., 2023; Savin, 2021). Most of the studies were qualitative or mixed methods (n=18), 3 were quantitative (Grubaugh et al., 2023; Feeg et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2023), and 1 was a literature review (Kaisla, 2022). Grey literature included 4 discussion papers (Gallagher, & Kopp, 2022; Horan & Dimino, 2020; Shermna & Labat, 2021; Schivinski & McNulty, 2020), and 6 theses (Broussard, 2023; Druse, 2022; Kosturko, 2022; Repsha, 2021; Savin, 2021; Stolzman, 2022).

Review findings indicated added stressors were placed on the usual NGN transition experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. These unique stressors made NGNs professional transition experiences more difficult and stressful than anticipated (Bani et al., 2023; Bultas & L'Ecuyer, 2022; Casella et al., 2023; Kaisla, 2022). The mandatory cessation, or the switch to a simulated clinical experience in their undergraduate programs (Grubaugh et al., 2023; McMillan et al., 2023; Sherman & Labat, 2021; Smith et al., 2021), left NGNs feeling unprepared and unconfident as they lacked hands-on experience and had little familiarity with infectious disease or caring for the critically ill and dying (Bultas et al., 2022; Kaisla, 2022; Naylor et al., 2021; Sherman & Labat, 2021; Suplee et al., 2022). Glover et al. (2022) surveyed emergency department nurses about their perceptions of NGNs during COVID-19 who reported to perceive a lack of clinical skills as their greatest weakness and suggested students support from nursing faculty with skill building, communication, and self-care strategies to build and maintain resilience was required to assist prepare NGNs for transition.

Amplifying stressors for NGNs was the lack of adequate orientation, mentorship, and insufficient staffing (Bani et al., 2023; Kaisla, 2022). Carnesten et al. (2022) noted work overload and a shortage of nurses forced NGNs to exert themselves beyond what they described as their own limits including taking on the role of what they considered to be that of the more experienced nurse. This was seen as an additional and unfair stressor as NGNs struggled to adapt to new roles, heavy workloads, and constantly changing COVID-19 protocols amidst an unknown, uncertain, and potentially hostile clinical setting (Carnesten et al., 2022). With the fluctuations in extremely busy clinical environments came increased expectations for NGNs to be adaptable and flexible and added responsibilities with minimal support impacting their mental health and wellness (Godbold et al., 2022).

The use of personal protective equipment was found to have had a significant impact on NGN professional socialization, and patient care (Blanco et al., 2023; Kaisla, 2022). Casey et al. (2021) conducted focus groups with NGNs who voiced masks created communication barriers between themselves and clients, hindering the development of therapeutic relationships and leaving them feeling unable to provide the care they could potentially provide. NGNs also expressed fears about the potential scarcity of personal protective equipment and questioned whether personal protective equipment was keeping them safe (Naylor et al., 2021).

The context of COVID-19 during NGN transition to practice had significant physical and psychological impacts for NGNs (McMilian et al., 2023). Physically, NGNs reported difficulties eating, sleeping, and concentrating (Druse, 2022). Psychologically, many NGNs experienced feelings of anxiety, stress, depression, nervousness, and exhaustion (Druse, 2022; Repsha, 2021). Moral distress was experienced by NGNs related to COVID-19 protocols and the ability to provide quality care, such as witnessing

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patients die without a family member present due to social isolation mandates (Carnesten et al., 2022; Horan, & Dimino, 2020). These emotions have been known to be positively correlated with increased risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and burnout (Kovanci, & Özbas, 2022; Naylor et al., 2021).

NGNs felt overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious as they struggled to cope with caring for high acuity patients with limited training, working short-staffed and during a global public health emergency (Naylor et al., 2021). Feelings of fear stemmed from the worry of harming patients by doing something incorrectly and infecting friends and family members (Carnesten et al., 2021; Kovanci, & Özbas, 2021; McMillian et al., 2023; Naylor et al., 2021; Savin, 2021). Reality shock, depersonalization, and reservations about “picking the wrong career” were also noted (Druse, 2022, p. 88; Stolzman, 2022). Coping strategies employed by NGNs to mitigate the above concerns ranged from self-care, including setting boundaries and saying no to requests, personal reflection, debriefing with colleagues and peers, exercising, and engaging in social activities (Druse, 2022; McMillian et al., 2023; Naylor et al., 2021), to the use of satire/sarcasm, overeating, and drinking (Druse, 2022; Kaisla, 2022; Savin, 2021; Sessions et al., 2021).

Nursing educators were seen as being well positioned to help bridge the transition between student nurse and independent nurse (Feeg et al., 2022; Glover et al., 2022). Recommendations for educational institutions to reduce NGN stressors included promoting student awareness and planning for professional transition and adding course work related to pandemic training, caring for the critically ill, death and dying, and psychological wellness (Bani, et al., 2022; Druse, 2022; Schivinski, & McNulty, 2021; Suplee et al., 2022).

At the organizational level, recommendations included supportive and adaptive nursing leadership, maintaining positive learning/workplace environments, ensuring adequate orientation, the retention or initiation of transition programs, and ongoing monitoring to help reduce transition shock in NGNs (Broussard, 2023; Gallagher, & Kopp, 2022; Godbold et al., 2022; Grubaugh et al., 2023; Fernandez-Basanta et al., 2022; Cao et al., 2021, Kaisla, 2022; Smith et al. 2021). Mentorship programs, resilience and coping training, were found to reduce transition shock and enhance professional quality of life for NGNs (Cao et al., 2021; Druse, 2022). Although some authors inferred that it is the responsibility of policy makers and nursing management to develop regulations and resources to support healthcare workers in challenging conditions (Kovanci & Özbas, 2022), few NGNs have accessed resources such as webinars, counselling hotlines, and hospital chaplains (Naylor et al., 2021). Further research is required to determine the rationale for the lack of uptake.

Although several recommendations regarding how to reduce transition stressors experienced by NGNs were noted in the literature, few were offered to assist increase or maintain the mental health and well-being of NGNs. Moreover, there was a noted lack of organizational monitoring of NGNs mental health and well-being. When evaluated, most healthcare organizations focused on existing institutional data such as sick time, medication errors, and intent to leave as indicators of job satisfaction and mental health (Druse, 2022; Kaisla, 2022; Kovanci, & Özbas, 2022). Recommendations to support NGN mental health included providing stress management training, resiliency training or journaling, counselling/debriefing services, and the creation of trauma informed wellness programs for RNs and

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were not specifically targeted to NGNs (Casella, et al., 2023; Naylor et al., 2021). Many of these recommendations involved providing NGNs with supports and services after exposure to the stressor(s) to promote the development of resiliency and the ability to recover from adversity (Schivinski, & McNulty, 2021). It was evident that robust mental health supports and concern for psychological safety was needed within organizations (Schivinski, & McNulty, 2021).

Finally, it is important to note a few articles in this literature research indicated that despite the challenges experienced by NGNs during their first years of practice during COVID-19, many retained a positive view of the profession and a strong desire to be an RN (Bultas, & L'Ecuyer, 2022; Casey et al., 2021). These NGNs described feeling empowered by both self and public acknowledgement of the importance of their work as caregivers during the pandemic (Carnesten et al., 2022).

Results of the literature review highlight the need to focus on NGN specific resources and supports at multiple levels with a focus on preparation, retaining or initiating in-person activities and on-going monitoring of NGNs' mental health and well-being.

### **3.2 New Graduate Nurse Interviews**

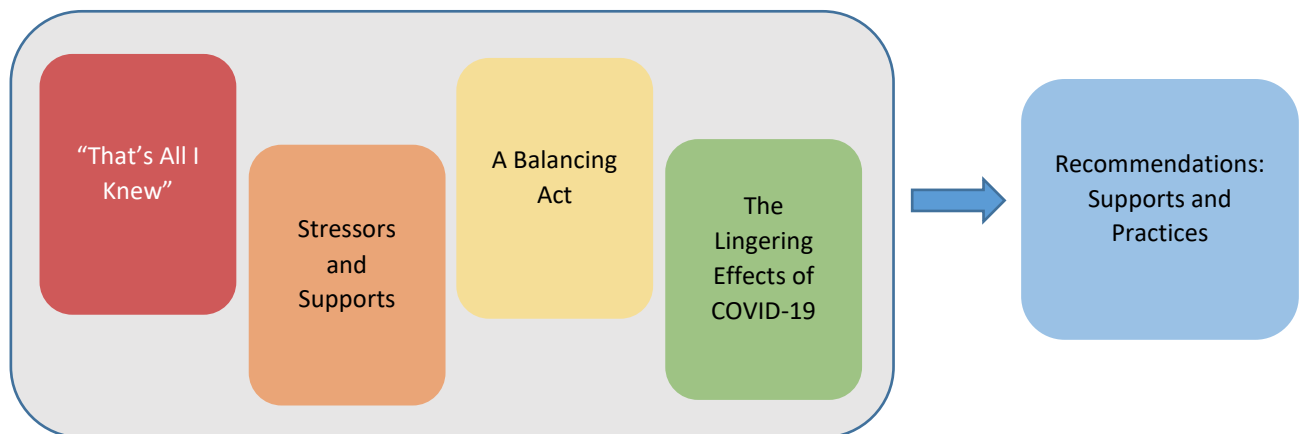
Semi-structured interviews were conducted with NGNs to answer the overarching research question and three outlined objectives. Interviews were conducted with fifteen RNs (87% female; mean age 26 years) who graduated from a Canadian nursing program between 2020 and 2022 and worked as a RN in NL shared their experiences and perceptions of their mental health and well-being and awareness of supportive resources, as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in NL.

Table 1.

<b>Participant Demographics</b>		
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>n</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	<b>15</b>	(100%)
Mean (range) in years		25.6 (22-33)
<b>Gender:</b>	<b>15</b>	(100%)
Female	13	(87.6%)
<b>Nursing Experience:</b>	<b>14</b>	(93.3%)
Mean (range) in months		11.7 (1-30)
<b>Position Type:</b>	<b>13</b>	
Casual	4	(30.8%)
Part-time	4	(30.8%)
Full-time	5	(38.4%)
Permanent	2	(15.4%)
Temporary	11	(84.6%)

Four overarching themes and suggestions for future practice evolved from the interview findings that depict NGN's experiences as they transitioned to practice during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The

four themes include: 1) “That’s All I Knew”, 2) Stressors and Supports, 3) A Balancing Act, and 4) The Lingering Effects of COVID-19. These led to the development of suggested supports and practices for NGNs transitioning to practice during a public health crisis.



### 3.2.1 “That’s All I Knew”

This theme illustrated NGN’s perspective of their transition experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although they recognized their transition experience was different from other NGN experiences, they described it as normal for them, as they completed their undergraduate clinical placements during the pandemic. Participants of this study expressed awareness of and sympathy for those experienced nurses who had limited experience with nursing during a pandemic. Participants’ recognized the significant shift in practice this cohort had to make to adjust to the realities of the pandemic. NGNs were grateful for not having to make this shift as practicing in a pandemic was all they knew.

One participant described their transition experience during a pandemic as:

*To be honest with you...I don’t know anything outside of having a mask and screening people. I don’t know really what it would be like without it. (P6)*

Another expressed compassion for their experienced peers who were required to make such a large adjustment in practice and compared it to their own experience stating:

*I don’t know any different. So I don’t know what it was like before the pandemic so I think about the nurses who were working before the pandemic and then had to make that adjustment. But for me coming out...that’s all I knew. (P1)*

### 3.2.2 Stressors and Supports

This theme highlighted the various stressors and supports NGNs experienced as they transitioned to their new roles. These ranged from those experienced before completing their undergraduate program to those after beginning their roles as a new RN.

## **Stressors**

NGNs who participated in this study expressed the changes to the undergraduate programs due to the COVID-19 added strain to their transition and building relationships with their new peers. This was related to restrictions put in place regarding in-person learning such as labs and clinical placements. Many were of the mindset that nurses in practice did not truly understand that they not have the opportunity to practice their skills in real life and may require some additional support. One NGN described the impact of these changes as:

*Like when we first went back to clinical during COVID was scary when those nurses didn't really understand or weren't really empathetic or understanding...all of our skills labs for a while were online. So like these important skills like made the transition so hard because you didn't actually do them...like it was scary going back after COVID as a new grad – you feel like you missed out on a lot. (P4)*

Some participants described their experienced peers as supportive under these circumstances while others found they placed additional stressors upon them with one stating:

*One of the big issues that I kind of experienced was some nurses as a new grad would give me almost the grunt work and even if it was not busy...they were still giving me more and more things to do or expecting me to do things they could be doing...I was swamped and they were just sitting back chatting. (P7)*

Staffing shortages, perpetually changing policies and public health mandates placed additional pressure on NGNs. These tended to fluctuate over time with the waves of the pandemic. Staffing shortages was a particular concern for NGNs with the requirement to work overtime as raising safety to practice concerns. One participant stated:

*So I got mandated [to work overtime] after a night shift...I don't understand how anybody can get mandated after a 12-hour night shift and be safe to work. (P1)*

Another shared staffing shortages resulted in anxiety and a decrease in confidence in their ability to provide care. A NGN shared:

*We were short-staffed...there were definitely a lot of times where I had a patient where I didn't feel explicitly competent to care for them. So there was a lot of anxiety. Am I doing my job right? Am I going to be able to keep this person alive while they're here? It was a lot of questioning if I was...competent to do the job or that I deserved the title that I have. (P8))*

The fluctuating external mandates either created barriers to usual supports or permitted access after increased periods of stress. One NGN expressed the impact of the ebb and flow of these supports as:



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*Having the rules...more relaxed overtime, I think that really made a difference. Yeah, honestly, just the [lack] of physical and emotional support you get from other people really impacted me starting as a nurse during COVID because...that's when I needed it. (P6)*

### **Supports**

Identified supports were identified at multiple stages of transition. The location of their final few student clinical placements was viewed as a support, as early in the pandemic nursing students were restricted from circulating to multiple areas for placements. To assist students in their final year to graduate on time, they completed the final few placements on the same unit. This assisted to ease the transition experience for some by becoming familiar with team members and the unit with one NGN with one sharing:

*So it was a very smooth transition for me because I had spent so much time as a student on that floor and I really got to know the staff. (P14)*

Once hired to their first RN position, awareness of resources to support their mental health and well-being was limited to the information shared in orientation and processes offered on the unit. All participants shared they were aware of the employee assistance program (EAP), with a few stating they had participated in debriefings after critical events. One identified their facilitator as a support. Although supports were identified, challenges regarding access and purpose of the resources were raised. Those who were aware of the EAP shared the number of available counselling sessions either interrupted access to services or resulted in those seeking assistance to choose external supports. One participant shared:

*Because of the way [the] EAP program works I had to stop seeing that therapist so then I didn't see anyone consistently after that. (P12)*

A few described the benefits of debriefing; however they were noted to be inconsistent in their purpose and needed to be arranged by a leader such as their unit manager which was inconvenient for staff requiring support on off hours. One participant described their experience participating in debriefing sessions focused on learning after an event:

*Like the debriefs are amazing. We actually sit down and have a debrief after, like any emergency situation like they really want everyone to feel comfortable and learn. (P4)*

Another described debriefing sessions they were involved in that focused assisting staff manage stress and emotions after a critical event stating:

*We have debriefing sessions that occur at our workplace that typically occur after stressful or emotional situations...oftentimes, when our manager or our patient care facilitator recognized that the staff are emotionally and mentally affected by such events, they do reach out to arrange those debriefing events for us. (P5)*

Others described the lack of access to debriefing sessions and the missed opportunity to support their well-being.

*There have [been] certain times where we've had a ton of poor outcomes or a ton of losses and things and we could have used debriefing that we didn't get or we didn't get support from our management in getting that. (P6)*

Mentorship was a supportive resource that NGNs did not have access to during this public health crisis. NGNs shared they wished they had opportunity to build relationships with more experienced peers to assist them navigate their transition to practice. One NGN described:

*I think a really big thing is mentorship. If there was some form of mentorship, it would be a lot better transition. If you had somebody who was a bit more seasoned that you could go to and speak to but like the hospital here does not have that and I did not have that. (P15)*

### 3.2.3 A Balancing Act

This theme described novice nurses' attempts at balancing their own mental health and wellness with a demanding work environment, resulting in fatigue and need for self-care and socialization.

#### **Self-care vs. Caring for Others**

NGNs described the internal struggle of meeting their own care needs to enable them to continue to care for others. With one participant sharing:

*There might not always be that ability to...take a moment for yourself to gather your thoughts so that you're still supporting your patient but not also suffering yourself. (P7)*

Several described they felt they needed to maximize their time off and schedule activities for self-care. Although the desire to engage in activities was present, the feeling of fatigue was perceived to be a challenge with one participant stating:

*I feel like my time is limited on my days off so I guess...in an ideal world on my days off it would be nice to be able to do all of those things that I guess would improve my mental health but to be honest oftentimes...I don't even have the energy to be able to do that. (P5)*

Another shared:

*There is still a big part of me where I'm like, oh my gosh, I have a day off! I need to do things and see people and not just sit here and cuddle up with my blanket. (P9)*

### **Socializing vs. Fear of Infection**

Participants of this study expressed the fear of infection while recognizing the desire and need to socialize. Some were specifically concerned with interacting with their family even when living at home. One described the balance of living with family members while working as an RN during the pandemic as:

*I was living with my family...so I just kind of hung out in my room and then sometimes they would leave the house and go on a walk together or drive together or something so I would go downstairs. (P13)*

Others expressed fear when trying to balance the desire to spend time with loved ones while feeling the responsibility of potentially spreading infection to their work colleagues or with their family. One describe this push and pull feeling as:

*I was afraid [of] spending time with my family and then go to work and possibly causing exposure on the unit and then people would be off and that contributing to the staffing crisis even more. And then I was afraid of bringing it home so that back and forth. (P1)*

### **3.2.4 The Lingering Effects of COVID-19**

This theme underscored both the emotional and tangible effects of the COVID-19 on novice nurses as they transitioned to practice during a pandemic. They described the lingering effects and responses to the pandemic. Some were motivated by the challenges, others felt defeated, some were left wondering, while still others stated that recovery is ongoing.

Some NGNs decided to persevere in their nursing careers despite the aforementioned challenges. One participant shared their decision to go on to graduate school; yet, others would make the decision to leave the nursing profession and seek out other educational and employment opportunities they felt would be less stressful. As the rationale for leaving the nursing profession was due to the level of stress incurred, NGNs experiencing burnout during their transition is a concern. NGNs had difficulties comparing themselves to other new graduate nurses from previous graduating years citing they felt their experiences were unique which left them in a questioning what could have been and needing to recover.

### **Motivation to Excel**

Some decided to persevere in their nursing careers despite the aforementioned challenges. One participant shared their decision to go on to graduate school stating:

*We've seen such an increase in drug use and substance-induced psychosis and repeat admissions of the same people coming in every few months so I really wanted to do a Masters in Public Health so I can...move to that level of care and ...try to create resources. (P1)*

### **Choosing another path**

Some new graduates found their transition to practice experience during the pandemic to be overwhelming and chose to leave the nursing profession entirely. One shared:

*I was like yeah, this is a very stressful work environment and a very stressful lifestyle so I chose to go back to school...it [nursing] wasn't something that I wanted to do. (P13)*

### **The 'What ifs'**

Others were left wondering what their transition experience would have been if not for the COVID-19 pandemic. This left them with a sense of loss and self-doubt. One participant expressed:

*There are so many unknowns. Was that the reason that it effected our education so much? Like I still feel like I'm a good new grad. I think I do a great job where I work. But you wonder, could I have been better if COVID [never happened]? (P4)*

### **Recovery**

Many participants of this study found they had a tendency to overschedule themselves leaving little time for recovery between shifts or from the greater impact of the pandemic experience. Several participants described a feeling of not knowing what to do with the perceived 'extra' time they had outside of work as having free time was unfamiliar after the high workload of undergraduate nursing studies. Once they completed their degree and were employed as a RN, many found the need to fill the perceived empty time with other jobs or activities such as taking on a second RN position or tutoring nursing students. Many participants of this study stated upon graduation they were excited to take up activities they had not had time to participate in while completing their undergraduate program. Adding extra RN casual or part time positions in organizations outside of their main employer led to challenging work schedules and little time for rest. Some took on positions that allowed them to feel that they were giving back, which brought them a sense of joy such as tutoring nursing students. In cases such as these, participants recognized they were fatigued, but were reluctant to give up the activity as it was a source of joy during a challenging time. One NGN stated:

*So some [activities] I really enjoy and so I find that being able to do that on my time off it fills my cup and enables me to improve my well-being but of course, depending on the day or the situation, it can also be challenging. (P5)*

Other participants expressed they felt they had not yet found their footing and that they needed time to mentally recover from their transition experiences. One described the feeling as:

*It's like intoxication...you go through things for so long and now you have...to recuperate and recover. (P9)*

## 4.0 Recommendations: Supports and Practices

Several suggestions for future practice emerged from the results of the literature review and the interviews conducted in this study. These have been grouped into recommendations for academia, health care organizations, and new graduate nurses.

### **For Academia**

Evidence has shown that academic institutions that offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing play an imperative role in preparing NGNs for transition to practice during times of crisis. Findings of both the literature review and interviews suggest academic institutions should continue with in-personal clinical experiences during a public health crisis to ensure NGNs have the knowledge, skills and judgement they require to be success during challenging times. (Bultas et al., 2022; Kaisla, 2022; Naylor et al., 2021; Sherman & Labat, 2021; Suplee et al., 2022). Given that nursing is a practice discipline expected to provide competent patient care in times of crisis, nursing students must be exposed to these situations as a learner to ensure they develop the requisite knowledge and skills to function under such circumstances. The sudden change to online learning was seen as detrimental to NGNs learning and left them feeling insecure in their practice and wondering if they could have been a better nurse had they been able to complete their education as it had been designed. Interruptions to their education was felt as a barrier to success. These findings align with those of the literature review (Grubaugh et al., 2023; McMillan et al., 2023; Sherman & Labat, 2021; Smith et al., 2021). It is also suggested that educational institutions develop emergency plans to be implemented during a public health crisis and include regular meetings with healthcare organizations where students complete their placements and many are hired as NGNs. The purpose of these meetings would be to maintain an open dialogue to ensure the faculty is aware of any hospital policy changes and organizations are aware of any changes to usual education practices in order to prepare units receiving students, but specifically graduating NGNs. This information will be important to ensure a collaborative approach to address any perceived gaps in clinical experience and tailor the NGN transition experience to adapt to unique circumstances. Furthermore, it is recommended academic institutions invest in resources to foster resiliency in student nurses and expose them to public health crisis case studies to develop transferable skills. Resources might include increased access to mental health services and opportunities for students to engage in complex clinical scenarios throughout the curricula to foster confidence in students coping and decision making skills.

### **For Health Care Organizations**

It is suggested that health care organizations hiring NGNs provide on-going mental health support for NGNs hired during a public health crisis. Specifically, practices and resources such as debriefing, regular check-ins, mentorship, increased EAP benefits, and creative scheduling were suggested.

Literature review and interview findings indicate pandemic stressors added to the usual NGN transition challenges were difficult to navigate (Druse, 2022; Duchscher, 2008; McMilian et al., 2023; Repsha, 2021; Zhang et al., 2019). This resulted in NGNs seeking psychological supports or choosing to leave the

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profession. Participants of this study that sought mental health services through EAP were not able to continue to access this support when they had used the allotted number of sessions. As the mental health and well-being of these novice nurses benefits patient safety and the workplace as a whole, an increase in EAP sessions during a pandemic is recommended. This aligns with an initiative to providing specific, targeted mental health support for RNs during the pandemic which was shown to be successful in increasing a sense of belonging, protection, confidence as well as pride in their profession (Chen et al., 2021).

Debriefing was a resource that was recognized to have been implemented by several organizations; however, was noted to be challenging to access with leadership required to initiate the procedure through a request to another department. It is therefore recommended that debriefing be automatically triggered after critical events such as a code to allow both a process review and opportunity to discuss any difficult emotions that may arise by a team member including an NGN. Separate one on one debriefing are also suggested at the end of each shift or set of shifts with NGNs and their mentors if engaged in these types of relationships. These approaches align with those noted in the literature to increase the confidence and competence of RNs and manage complex emotions after a critical event or ongoing period of stress (Shinners et al., 2016). Improved patient outcomes have resulted by the implementation of these strategies (Shinners et al., 2016).

Mentorship was noted to have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic due to staffing shortages and the need for NGNs to work independently. Mentorship processes were also noted to require revision such as mentor selection, preparation and pairing as some participants of this study who were either involved in mentorship before it had been ceased or witnessed mentorship after it had restarted found these processes to be lacking and resulted in additional stressors for the NGNs, mentors and the team. Supportive resources such as mentorship are therefore recommended to continue during a public health crisis considering the important role these relationships play in the socialization and retention of NGNs (Venkatesa Perumal & Singh, 2022).

Scheduling was a noted challenge and stressor for many NGN participants of this study. Participants noted mandatory overtime was a deterrent to taking on full-time employment as an RN. NGNs stated they chose to take part-time or casual positions to have more control of their schedule and avoid mandatory overtime whenever possible. Several participants worked positions in multiple organizations and worked full time hours but felt satisfied as they created their own schedule. Others worked in a casual position and worked full-time hours until they felt they were becoming overly stressed and then took on temporary contracts out of province to have 'change of scenery'. This provided a sense of rejuvenation and allowed them to return to their casual positions after their contracts had ended feeling better than when they had left. This approach led to the recommendation for organizations to explore self-scheduling to allow that sense of control and retain NGNs in the organization to which they were hired.

The timing of the aforementioned initiatives is an important consideration given the literature suggests these types of initiatives have often been offered after exposure to critical events that could have a negative impact on the mental health and well-being of a NGN (Schivinski, & McNulty, 2021). It is

therefore recommended to offer resources before exposure to assist build resilience and provide ongoing after-care when needed.

### **For new graduate nurses**

Recommendations for NGNs included those related to self-care. Many participants of this study stated they engaged in exercise to assist cope with stress. Some expressed interest in having gym facilities available to them at work, while others preferred getting out and accessing facilities outside of their work environment. This change of scenery assisted them to disconnect from work related stressors and supported the need to have time for themselves. NGNs entering practice are therefore recommended to engage in some form of physical activity in a location that suits their individual needs and preferences.

NGNs in this study were also noted to overschedule themselves. This is a concern as it indicates hyperactivity or work overload which is known predictor of burnout (de Beer, et al., 2016). As high levels of stress were cited as the rationale for those who chose to leave the nursing profession, NGN burnout during transition to practice is a concern. As a result, it is suggested NGNs be aware of the tendency to overschedule and become comfortable with 'downtime' between shifts. Although engaging in self-care activity is promoted, too much activity can become an additional stressor rather than a tool to manage pressure. Additional research is required to assist determine the best approach to reaching this balance for NGNs, particularly during a pandemic when external pressures to both stay at home and work overtime exist.

Making time for socialization is an important for mental health, particularly during a public health crisis. Although NGNs expressed mixed feelings associated with socializing, such as fear and anxiety related to infection control, they also recognized it was a needed activity that was needed even when feeling tired at the end of a shift or on NGNs days off. During a pandemic, face-to-face socialization many not be feasible; however, it is recommended NGNs be encouraged to continue to engage with others either through outdoor social distancing or via social media platforms such as ZOOM or Webex.

Many of the participants of this study expressed they had sought professional help to cope with the struggles they faced during the pandemic. Several stated they continued to see a practitioner regularly to assist them with their well-being. Many stated they were aware of EAP due to the information shared in orientation, however were unaware of any other resources available to them. Those who did seek help through the EAP or externally stated the benefits to assist cover such care was not sufficient for what was required and recommended and increase to these benefits to support the mental health and well-being of nurses, particularly new graduates as they transition to practice during a public health crisis and beyond. It is therefore recommended NGNs continue to seek care outside of their employer or consider taking on full-time employment to increase access to benefits and lobby for additional coverage if they feel they have the capacity to do so.

## 5.0 Limitations

Limitations of this study pertained to the recruitment of participants and type of interviews conducted. It was hoped that NGNs from all zones within NL Health Services would be represented in this study. As only two zones were represented, the findings reflect the perspectives of NGNs from specific areas of the province rather than the whole. Additionally, all interviews were conducted by telephone. This limited the opportunity to read body language during the interviews and left tone of voice, inflection and vocabulary used to assist interpret meaning of the information shared by participants.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are just beginning to be understood. Healthcare professionals continue to grapple with the lingering effects of the pandemic on their mental health and well-being. Understanding the mental health and well-being of those novice to their professions, such as NGNs will assist to develop tailored resources to ensure they are supported as we emerge from this public health crisis and prepare for the future events. This study assisted to fill a gap in that understanding, specifically regarding the experiences and perceptions of NGNs transitioning to practice in NL. Results of the literature review and interviews conducted provide a well-rounded perspective of the broader understanding of NGNs' transition to practice experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as specific NGN experiences in NL. Overarching results of the NGN interviews mirrored findings of the literature review with unique contributions lending to bespoke recommendations for resources to support the mental health and well-being of NGNs entering practice during a public health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Actions by academic institutions, health care organizations and NGNs themselves are recommended to assist ease the challenge of transition to practice when NGNs are needed most, and improve the safety of workplace environments and patient care.



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Zhu, Y., Tang, W., Zhang, Y., Li, M., Zhu, W., & Zhang, Y. (2023). Job satisfaction and negative coping style affect the relationship between transition shock and intent to stay among newly graduated nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 2023, 1-10.  
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## Appendix A

### Table of Articles and Abstracts

#	Author(s)	Pub. Date	Title	Keywords	Source	Abstract
1	Bani, M., Russo, S., Cardinale, C., Ardenghi, S., Rampoldi, G., Luciani, M., Ausili, D., Di Mauro, S., & Strepparava, M. G.	2023	<a href="#">"Jumping into the COVID-19 arena": The professional transition into clinical practice of new graduate nurses in Italy at time of COVID-19</a>	COVID-19, new graduate nurses, pandemic, professional transition	Journal	<b>Aims and Objectives:</b> To evaluate the impact of the professional transition of new graduate nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic. <b>Background:</b> The transition from the role of student to the professional role can be challenging for new graduate nurses for the acquisition of higher autonomy and responsibility. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the quality of the professional transition. <b>Design:</b> This was a cross-sectional observational study following the Strengthening and Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology checklist. <b>Methods:</b> One hundred and two nurses who graduated in three consecutive sessions (November 2019—pre-pandemic, March 2020—pandemic outbreak, and November 2020—2nd wave) in a north Italian university located in the most affected Italian region by the COVID-19 pandemic, completed an online survey assessing well-being, risk of burnout, resilience, perceived stigma, strengths and limitations and quality of the professional transition. The study was performed between March and May 2021. <b>Results:</b> 81.4% of participants described the professional transition as worse than expected, and new graduate nurses who worked in COVID-19 settings reported a more difficult transition to professional life. No differences emerged in burnout, mental well-being and perceived stigma between new



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						graduate nurses who worked in COVID-19 settings and those who did not. Similarly, no differences emerged amongst the three graduated cohort sessions. The most commonly mentioned challenges faced during the transition were organizational aspects, suddenly acquired autonomy and lack of suitable coaching. <b>Conclusion:</b> New graduate nurses reported a challenging academic-professional transition, in particular, those who worked in COVID-19 settings. The mid- and long-term impact of experiencing an academic-professional transition in COVID-19 settings should be assessed and monitored. <b>Relevance to clinical practice:</b> The professional transition of new graduate students should be adequately planned and monitored, new graduates should be assisted to develop realistic expectations about the transition, and an adequate coaching period should be guaranteed all the more during health emergencies.
2	Blanco, K., Ely, E., DeAlmeida, K., & Bohr, N. L.	2023	<a href="#">Transitioning to Independent Nursing Practice during COVID-19: A Mixed Methods Study</a>	nurses, COVID-19, program development, mentors, burnout, professional	Journal	The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to onboard and support new graduate nurses (NGNs). This study sought to explore the perceptions of nurses entering clinical practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using mixed methods, we investigated the experiences of NGNs entering the field during the pandemic and how a nurse residency program (NRP) adapted to meet their needs. Newly graduated nurses entering practice in November 2019 described their transition through nurse experience surveys and focus group discussions. Results from the quantitative data reported on compassion, satisfaction, burnout, and exposure to secondary traumatic stress. The

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						qualitative data mirrored these findings with the discovery of the following five themes: transitioning through an NRP, impact to nursing care, value of coworkers, coping, and professional growth. These findings illustrate the need to better support future practice transitions in times of disruption and change.
3	Broussard, T. A.	2023	<a href="#">Comparing Initial, Six-Month, and Twelve-Month Casey Fink New Graduate Nurse Survey Scores and Examining End of Program Evaluation Survey Responses Pre-COVID-19 Pandemic and During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a>	N/A	Dissertation	The future of the nursing profession is highly influenced by new graduate nurse retention. Implementing a nurse residency program is one avenue for potentially supporting new graduate nurses to improve first-year workforce retention. The purpose of the study was to compare the Casey Fink New Graduate Nurse Experience Survey Scores during the initial, 6-month, and 12-month periods pre-Covid-19 pandemic and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, new graduate nurses' responses to an End of Program Survey preCovid-19 pandemic and during the Covid-19 pandemic were examined. This study utilized retrospective data from one nurse residency program in a southern state in the United States between March 2019 through July 2021. Five hypothesis statements and two research questions were developed for the study. Data analysis was completed using a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) approach, which compared the means from the dependent variables utilized in the CaseyFink New Graduate Nurse Survey. In addition, similar themes were identified from responses that emerged to address the research questions. Findings indicated that new graduate nurses required support in the work

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						environment from nursing leaders and colleagues during the transition, regardless of the time frame. Furthermore, implementing nurse residency programs benefits new graduate nurses and may help decrease nursing turnover and the current nursing shortage.
4	Bultas, M. W., & L'Ecuyer, K. M.	2022	<a href="#">A Longitudinal View of Perceptions of Entering Nursing Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a>	N/A	Journal	<b>Background.</b> The COVID-19 pandemic significantly changed the landscape of health care and transition to practice for new graduates. The purpose of this pilot study was to explore the effects of the pandemic on the first-year experience of new nurses. <b>Method.</b> A longitudinal, observational, descriptive study design was used. One hundred eighteen survey links were sent to new bachelor of science in nursing graduates from June 2020 to May 2021, with 56 responses to the first survey. <b>Results.</b> Participants indicated the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected the new graduate experience, resulted in concern for personal health and safety, and negatively altered preparation for the first year in practice. However, desire to be a nurse and view of nursing remained positive. <b>Conclusion.</b> The first year in practice is stressful and challenging. The pandemic posed additional challenges to employers and new graduates. Future research should explore the long-term impact of the pandemic on an already strained nursing workforce.
5	Cao, X. Y., Li, J., & Gong, S.	2021	<a href="#">The relationships of both transition shock, empathy, resilience and</a>	Compassion fatigue, Compassion satisfaction,	Journal	<b>Background:</b> Data on professional quality of life in newly graduated nurses are scarce. This study aimed to describe the levels of professional quality of life, and to explore the relationships of transition shock, empathy, resilience and

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			<p><a href="#">coping strategies with professional quality of life in newly graduated nurses</a></p>	<p>Coping strategies, Empathy, Newly graduated nurses, Professional quality of life, Resilience, Transition shock</p>	<p>coping strategies with professional quality of life in newly graduated nurses. <b>Methods:</b> This was a cross-sectional study, which used a two-stage sampling method to recruit 393 newly graduated nurses in Sichuan province of China. Multiple regression analysis was used to explore the effects of transition shock, empathy, resilience and coping strategies on professional quality of life. Data were collected using standardized scales. <b>Results:</b> The prevalence of average levels of compassion satisfaction, burnout and secondary traumatic stress in newly graduated nurses were 80.2, 38.2 and 57.5%, respectively. Transition shock was a significant negative predictor, and empathy, resilience and adaptive coping were significant positive predictors for compassion satisfaction. Transition shock and passive coping were significant positive predictors, and empathy was a significant negative predictor for burnout and secondary traumatic stress. Resilience and adaptive coping contributed to burnout significantly and negatively. <b>Conclusion:</b> Higher transition shock and lower empathy cause lower compassion satisfaction and higher compassion fatigue. More resilience and adaptive coping cause more compassion satisfaction and less burnout. More passive coping contributes to higher compassion fatigue. Strategies such as transition or preceptorship programmes, and empathy, resilience and coping training are effective methods to reduce transition shock, facilitate empathy, resilience and coping, and consequently, enhance professional quality of life in newly graduated nurses.</p>
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6	Carnesten, H., Wiklund Gustin, L., Skoglund, K., & Von Heideken Wågert, P.	2022	<a href="#">Battling extraordinary situations and conflicting emotions-A qualitative study of being a newly graduated Registered Nurse in the emergency department during the COVID-19 pandemic</a>	advanced nursing, care, COVID -19, emergency department, emergency care, nurses, qualitative approaches, stress	Journal	<b>Aim:</b> To describe newly graduated registered nurses' (NGRNs') experiences of encountering stress in emergency departments (EDs) during the COVID-19 pandemic. <b>Design:</b> A qualitative descriptive study. <b>Methods:</b> Data from 14 in-depth interviews with NGRNs working in an ED for 3-36 months after graduation was analyzed by the means of qualitative content analysis as described by Graneheim and Lundman. Interviews were conducted from March to November 2020 covering the first two waves of the pandemic. <b>Results:</b> Data revealed three categories and nine subcategories comprised in the theme Battling extraordinary situations and conflicting emotions. Empowered by acknowledging themselves as important caregivers during the pandemic NGRNs struggle against limitations and exert themselves beyond their known limit. External stressors due to work overload in combination with understaffing force NGRNs into the role of the experienced nurse prematurely and internal stressors derives from part taking in less qualitative care.
7	Casella, G., Beretta, M., Costa, F., Opizzi, D., Pompini, P., Posla, S., Sanfratello, R., Guasconi, M., & Merlini, C.	2023	<a href="#">Experiences of newly hired nurses during the Covid-19 emergency: descriptive qualitative research</a>	Covid-19, New hire nurse, Qualitative research	Journal	<b>Background and aim of the work:</b> The Covid-19 pandemic led to an increased demand for healthcare professionals, particularly nurses. The Piacenza Local Health Service, Northern Italy, issued several calls for tenders in order to recruit nurses and the University anticipated graduation sessions, so several new graduates nurses found themselves facing their first work experience in the middle of the pandemic emergency. It is well known that being a first-time employee causes stress, but there are few studies yet investigating the perception

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						of newly employed nurses during the pandemic. The aim of this research is therefore to describe the experience of these nurses. <b>Methods:</b> A descriptive qualitative study was conducted through interviews. The research was approved by the 'Area Vasta Emilia Nord Ethics Committee. <b>Results:</b> 14 nurses were interviewed and nine themes were found. Emotions, awareness, job opportunities, professional liability, organizational aspects and relationship with the other. <b>Conclusions:</b> Our study shows how stress, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy characterize new nurses' entry into the workplace. Emotional support strategies, such as counselling and emergency preparedness training, could help early career professionals to cope with complex and emotionally charged clinical care situations with greater resilience
8	Casey, K., Oja, K. J., & Makic, M. B. F.	2021	<a href="#">The lived experiences of graduate nurses transitioning to professional practice during a pandemic</a>	Graduate nurse Transition to practice COVID-19 Pandemic	Journal	<b>Background:</b> Graduate nurses face challenges during their transition to professional practice. Understanding these experiences during a pandemic has not been explored. <b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this study is to describe the lived experiences of graduate nurses transitioning to practice during a pandemic. <b>Methods:</b> Using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, focus groups were conducted with fifteen nurses who were at three different stages of transition and participating in a 12-month Graduate Nurse Residency Program. <b>Findings:</b> Seven themes emerged: 1) being new is overwhelming, even more so during COVID-19, 2) need to be flexible, 3) pandemic knowledge and practice disconnect, 4) communication barriers worsened with masks, 5) being a "COVID nurse," 6) no self-care, and

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						7) gratitude: still glad to be a nurse. <b>Discussion:</b> Findings emphasize the important focus on graduate nurse support and educational foundation for role transition into professional practice, especially during a pandemic. Participants expressed lack of preparedness for practice but remain excited about being a nurse.
9	Druse, F. C., III	2022	<a href="#">The Lived Experiences of New Graduate Nurses During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Phenomenological Study</a>	N/A	Dissertation	Transitions of New Graduate Nurses have been the focus of research since Kramer's 1974 text Reality Shock. With a growing nursing shortage, transitions to nursing practice have been a focus of nursing research. By 2030, 25% of nurses are predicted to retire from the nursing profession prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Evidence suggests that upward of 20% of new graduate nurses either quit or exit the profession within their first year. This problem is documented in research prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In 2020, the world faced an unprecedented global pandemic that changed both academia and transitions to practice. This hermeneutic phenomenological research study explored the lived experiences of new graduate nurses utilizing Duchscher's Transition Shock Theory (2009) as a theoretical framework. This study consisted of 15 participants. All participants were from the northeastern region of the United States In the findings, 4 themes emerged based on the semi-structured interviews with the participants. Among the five themes, participants identified challenges in their transitions from completing nursing school to obtaining jobs, having a perception of what nursing would be like rather than the reality they faced, challenges with coping and dealing with the

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						emotions of being a frontline nurse in and around the era of the COVID19 pandemic, lack of knowledge and skillset pertaining to death and dying, and the challenge of moving back to a normal healthcare environment in a post COVID-19 era. Recommendations from the study included expansion of partnerships between healthcare organizations and academic, expanded education of death in dying in nursing curriculum, and expanded exploration of the impacts of COVID-19 among the nursing workforce.
10	Feeg, V. D., Mancino, D., Vasquez-Clarfield, B., Garrison, C. M., Mahler, E., & Vance, C.	2022	<a href="#">A National Perspective on New Nurse Graduate Transition to Practice: Secondary Analysis of the National Student Nurses' Association 2021 New Graduate Survey</a>	N/A	Journal	The secondary analysis of the results of the 2021 National Student Nurses' Association New Graduate Survey demonstrates the negative impact on the 2021 new graduate nurses' confidence and reported stresses in their new jobs following a year of changes due to the pandemic. Leadership in nursing education and the clinical workplace must continue to bridge the gap between education and practice to support transition to practice.
11	Fernández-Basanta, S., Espremáns-Cidón, C., & Movilla-	2022	<a href="#">Novice nurses' transition to the clinical setting in the COVID-19 pandemic: A phenomenological</a>	COVID-19 Health services administration Novice nurses Nursing care	Journal	<b>Background:</b> The COVID-19 pandemic both exposed and increased weaknesses in the healthcare system, so that novice nurses have become a more vulnerable group during this context. <b>Aim:</b> This study sought to illuminate experience of novice nurses in providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic. <b>Method:</b> It consists of a qualitative



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	Fernández, M.-J.		<a href="#">hermeneutic study</a>	Nursing education Qualitative research		study conducted with data collected by means of semi structured interviews, audio recorded, transcribed, anonymized, and analyzed in the light of the phenomenological hermeneutic approach. Fourteen registered novice nurses from two health areas in northwest of Spain, being twelve women and two men, who experienced the COVID-19 pandemic within their first five years of professional experience, were selected through a non-statistical snowball sampling. <b>Results:</b> After analyzing the narratives, we identified four main themes: "Transitioning to a hostile, unknown and uncertain clinical setting from inexperience," "Invisible wounds because of being on the front line," and "Healing to return to the front line." <b>Discussion:</b> The uncertainty of an unknown illness and the lack of support during the COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting novice nurses, impacting their health conditions. At the same time, this context created opportunities for professional development. According to the interviewees, self-care and social support were elements to cope with exhaustion. <b>Conclusion:</b> Our study investigates the experiences of a group barely approached in the literature, highlighting the reality and difficulties of these nurses in transitioning to the clinical setting and providing insights to managerial leaders and educators.
12	Gallagher, K. A., & Kopp, E.	2022	<a href="#">Adaptable, Flexible, Resilient, and Strong: A Nurse Residency Transition During</a>	N/A	Journal	Nurse residency programs (NRPs) support newly licensed nurses in their transition from student to professional nurses through series of learning and simulation experiences. Historically, NRP seminars are typically held in person, fostering connections and thriving on networking

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			<a href="#">a Global Pandemic</a>			opportunities. The purpose of this column is to outline the perspectives of Kelly Gallagher, Director of the Nurse Residency Program at Penn Medicine, focusing on how the NRP team at Penn Medicine quickly responded to the global pandemic, COVID-19, to create a virtual NRP, and Elizabeth Kopp, a 25-year-old new graduate nurse resident from the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She began as a newly licensed nurse just a few days prior to the start of the pandemic.
13	Glover, H. A., Hitt, A. & Harrington, L.	2022	<a href="#">From the Frontlines to the Future: Emergency Department Nurses' Advice During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a>	N/A	Journal	<b>Background:</b> Nurse educators are challenged to bridge the gap between academia and the health care environment to provide nursing students with the knowledge and skills to ensure their readiness to practice. With limited traditional clinical experiences, many new graduate nurses begin their careers in high-stress environments such as emergency departments. <b>Methods:</b> A convenience sample of 66 emergency department nurses completed two qualitative survey questions related to their experiences working with new graduate nurses during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. <b>Results:</b> Respondents reported lack of clinical skills was the biggest weakness observed in new graduate nurses. Four themes were identified: protection and un-preparedness, thirst for knowledge, burnout, and support and self-care; these themes built the foundation for the overarching theme of resilience. <b>Conclusion:</b> Nurse faculty must be able to support students' transition into a rapidly changing health care environment. Student preparation should focus on

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						skill building, communication, self-care strategies, and resilience.
14	Godbold, R., Whiting, L., Adams, C., & Chokeepermal-Naidu, Y.	2022	<a href="#">'All we've ever known is Covid': A follow-up study with newly qualified nurses who worked as student nurses during the pandemic</a>	COVID-19, interviews, mental health, nursing graduate, nursing student, preceptorship, qualitative research, registered nurses	Journal	<b>Aims and Objectives:</b> To explore the experiences of nursing students in England who had worked through the first wave and transitioned to qualification in the ongoing pandemic. <b>Background:</b> Experiences of health professionals and student nurses during the pandemic are now well documented, but the transition of students to qualification is less well understood. In Summer 2020, we interviewed 16 student nurses who had worked as health care assistants on paid extended placements as part of the COVID-19 response in the East of England, finding surprisingly positive experiences, including perceived heightened preparedness for qualification. A year later, we re-interviewed 12 participants from the original study to hear about transitioning to qualification during the ongoing pandemic. This study provides novel insights into their experiences. <b>Design:</b> A qualitative study design was used. <b>Methods:</b> Twelve newly qualified nurses who had participated in the original study took part in qualitative, online interviews where they shared their experiences of working and transitioning to qualification during the ongoing pandemic since we spoke to them a year earlier. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. COREQ guidelines were used in developing and reporting this study. <b>Results:</b> Three themes were identified. Constant change: in the clinical environment and arising out of the transition to newly qualified nurse, mental health and well-being and reflecting on the past to learn for the future.

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						<p><b>Conclusions:</b> Participants experienced a unique transition to qualification. The perceived heightened preparedness for qualification that participants who had worked as students during the first wave of the pandemic had become a reality, ameliorating some of the known effects of transition. However, increased expectations and added responsibilities in extremely busy, fluctuating clinical environments with minimal support add weight to calls for mandatory preceptorship programs. While heightened resilience was evident, provision of ongoing mental health and well-being support is strongly recommended.</p> <p><b>Relevance to Clinical Practice:</b> We need a partnership approach with nurse educators and practice colleagues which ensures preparation for qualified practice is appropriate. If we do not effectively prepare students for qualified nurse posts, patient care will almost certainly be compromised.</p>
15	Grubaugh, M., Africa, L., & Neisinger, K.	2023	<a href="#">Managing the Current Workforce: Status of New Graduate Nurse Well-being and Clinical Development 2018-2021</a>	clinical development, COVID-19, new graduate nurse, transition to practice, well-being	Journal	A structured transition to practice (TTP) program is beneficial to the professional success and retention of new graduate nurses (NGNs). The COVID-19 pandemic impacted clinical preparation and the TTP experience of NGNs. Data from the Versant National Database between 2018 and 2021 were analyzed to determine the current state of NGN well-being and clinical development. Key findings from the analysis indicate that NGNs that are a part of a comprehensive TTP program remain highly committed to their organization, have increased satisfaction working with their colleagues, and indicate low intent to leave their position. However, there are

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						opportunities to address individual rewards and recognition, clinical assignments, morale, feelings of belongingness, and well-being. These findings further support the importance of a nurse residency program as part of an overall workforce strategy and that individual, programmatic, and practice environment outcomes must be longitudinally measured and analyzed to be able to make necessary evidence-based changes to meet the future needs of NGNs and the profession.
16	Horan, K. M. & Dimino, K.	2020	<a href="#">Supporting Novice Nurses During the COVID-19 Pandemic</a>	N/A	Journal	No abstract available
17	Ji, E.-J; Lee, Y., -H.	2021	<a href="#">New Nurses' Experience of Caring for COVID-19 Patients in South Korea</a>	COVID-19; nurse; communicable disease; qualitative research	Journal	The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of new nurses who took care of COVID-19 patients. For this study, study subjects were conducted with a total of nine new nurses, and data were collected through individual in-depth interviews from September to November 2020. The data were analyzed using the phenomenological analysis method suggested by Colaizzi. New nurses' experience of caring for COVID-19 patients consisted of three categories. The three categories are "The fear as a new nurse about infectious diseases that they have not experienced", "Physical and psychological burden in an isolated environment", and "Building professional values". Findings from this study presented vivid experiences of new nurses who took care of COVID-19 patients. This study is meaningful in that it grasped the physical and

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						psychological difficulties of nurses nursing COVID-19 patients, especially the difficulties as a new nurse, and the implications for developing and growing within them. It is expected that it will serve as basic data for the establishment of strategies for infectious education programs for new nurses.
18	Kaisla, L.	2022	<a href="#">Newly Graduated Nurses' Experiences of Entering Work Life During the Covid-19 Pandemic</a>	New nurses, newly graduated nurse, experiences, Covid-19, pandemic, Covid-19 pandemic	Journal	New nurses experience a variety of mixed emotions such as preparedness and uncertainty while transitioning from student to professional and at the beginning of developing their nursing identity. At this time, guidance and a welcoming environment is crucial. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has brought on extra mental and physical burden on nursing professionals in their everyday practice which further increases their need for support. The demanding working environment and work stress has affected nurses' wellbeing and desire to leave the profession. The aim of this literature review was to explore the experiences of newly graduated nurses on entering work life during the pandemic. The purpose was to find information, which could be used to enhance the introduction period of newly graduated nurses coming to work, and create awareness towards the difficulties new nurses face starting their nursing careers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Research was conducted as a literature review where a search from CINAHL and Medline databases was carried out in order to find relevant research which met the predetermined inclusion criteria. Six articles were included in the review. The articles were analyzed utilizing an inductive content analysis method.

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						<p>Following the data extraction the data was organized in order to determine themes and sub-themes. This literature review found that newly graduated nurses experienced work challenges, and their experiences of entering work life during the Covid-19 pandemic had an emotional and social impact on them. They faced insufficient preparation and training, practical burden, infection control challenges, a need for support as work challenges; pandemic anxiety, emotional burden, personal wellbeing and a positive outlook as an emotional impact; view of nursing profession, family concerns and collegial support as a social impact. New nurses entering their careers in the nursing field experience multifaceted challenges which are further exacerbated by the additional burden brought on by the ongoing pandemic. Development of means of support for all nursing professionals including new nurses is needed to support the training, nursing practice and work satisfaction and personal wellbeing of nurses. Further research is needed in exploring the experiences of new nurses and the short and long-term effects on new nurses beginning their careers during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
19	Kosturko, M. H.	2022	<a href="#">Retention of the Newly Licensed Registered Nursing Workforce Post-Coronavirus (COVID-19): Establishing a</a>	N/A	Dissertation	<p>Retention of newly licensed registered nurses (NLRNs) is crucial to the future success of a thriving nursing workforce. It is well-established that most NLRNs experience stress as they transition from school to work environments leading some to leave the workforce or nursing altogether within their first two years post-graduation. The novel Coronavirus virus (Covid-19) pandemic exacerbated this problem as NLRNs experienced</p>

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			<a href="#">Trauma-Informed Wellness Program, The Registered Nurse Residency Script for the Future (RNRx)</a>			increased stress, fear, exhaustion, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction, further threatening the future of the nursing workforce. The aim of this project was to develop and implement a trauma-informed wellness program in an acute care inpatient hospital, The Registered Nurse Residency Script for the Future (RNRx), to support the NLRNs well-being post-exposure to the traumatic experience of caring for patients with the novel Covid-19 virus. The 6-week RNRx program consisted of three program elements: (1) a Nurse-peer Buddy System; (2) Wellness Check-ins/Decompression huddles and; (3) Celebration/Compassion Circles. Thirty six participants completed the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale at the beginning and immediately following the end of the 6 week program. Pre and post program results for the overall STSS score were compared using a Welch one-tailed unpaired t test on the R foundation Statistical tool. The results show a statistically significant improvement in the overall well-being of all NLRN participants immediately after RNRx program completion (p= 0.004). The RNRx program can be easily and cost-effectively scaled across this large New England academic health system of five acute care hospitals and in other inpatient environments to support nurse well-being post-trauma. As the program is scaled, long term measurement of program impact on nurse retention is recommended
20	Kovanci, M. S., & Özbas, A. A.	2022	<a href="#">'Young saplings on fire' newly graduated nurses</a>	COVID-19, newly graduate	Journal	<b>Aim:</b> To explore the experiences of newly graduated nurses during the pandemic. <b>Background:</b> Newly graduated nurses were employed during the pandemic by



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			<a href="#">in the COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative study</a>	nurses, nursing, transition to practice		several countries to meet the increasing demand for healthcare services. <b>Methods:</b> A descriptive qualitative study with thematic analysis. The study was conducted with 14 newly graduated nurses. <b>Results:</b> Themes were systematized into four variables of the system research organization model, and a total of 12 themes were identified. Nurses, who started to work in the beginning months of the pandemic, faced several difficulties in their transition period, including the difficulties of starting employment and the effects of the pandemic on both society and health systems. <b>Conclusions:</b> During the pandemic, newly graduated nurses faced various difficulties in transition processes, difficulties in starting the employment process and the effects of the pandemic on both society and health systems. In order to reduce these effects, regulations are needed at all stages of the health system. Implications for Nursing Management: It is the responsibility of health system policymakers, hospital managers, nurse managers and senior nurses to ensure that newly graduated nurses endure these pandemic conditions, which are quite challenging even for senior nurses, without any damage, and continue in the profession
21	McMillan, K., Akoo, C., & Catigbe-Cates, A.	2023	<a href="#">New Graduate Nurses Navigating Entry to Practice in the Covid-19 Pandemic</a>	Covid-19, new graduate nurse, transition, nursing, education,	Journal	<b>Background:</b> The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted organizational life for nurses, with known physical and psychological impacts. New graduate nurses are a subset of nurses with unique needs and challenges as they transition into their registered nurse roles. However, this subset of nurses has yet to be explored in the context

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				socio-political knowledge		of the Covid-19 pandemic. <b>Purpose:</b> To explore the experiences of new graduate nurses entering the profession in Ontario, Canada, during the Covid19 pandemic approximately one year after entering the profession. <b>Methods:</b> Thorne’s interpretive description method was utilized. <b>Findings:</b> All participants identified as completing second entry nursing programs, offering a unique perspective on new graduate nurse transition. Four themes emerged in the data: ‘Virtual Didn’t Cut It,’ ‘Go Where You Know,’ ‘Picking Up the Pieces,’ and ‘Learning When to Say No and Let Go.’ Participants felt ill prepared to enter the profession and were cognizant of the various challenges facing the nursing profession, and how these pre-existing challenges were exacerbated by the pandemic. They acknowledged the need to protect themselves against burnout and poor mental health, and as such, made calculated early career decisions – demonstrating strong socio-political knowing. Half of the participants had already left their first nursing job; citing unmet orientation, mental health, and wellbeing needs. However, all participants were steadfast in remaining in the nursing profession. <b>Conclusions:</b> Second entry new graduate nurses remain a unique subset of nurses that require more scholarly attention as their transition experiences may differ from the traditional trajectory of new graduate nurses.
22	Naylor, H., Hadenfeldt, C., & Timmons, P.	2021	<a href="#">Novice Nurses' Experiences Caring for Acutely</a>	COVID-19; nursing; pandemic;	Journal	The Coronavirus pandemic erupted in 2020 and new graduate registered nurses (RNs) found themselves caring for those with devastating illness as they were

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			<a href="#">Ill Patients during a Pandemic</a>	qualitative research; workforce		transitioning into nursing practice. The purpose of this study was to describe the experience of novice nurses working in acute care settings during a pandemic. This qualitative phenomenological study of novice nurses working in facilities providing acute care for COVID-19 patients was conducted in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. Purposive sampling identified 13 participants for interviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Eight themes emerged: Dealing with death, Which personal protective equipment (PPE) will keep us safe?, Caring for high acuity patients with limited training, Difficulties working short-staffed, Everything is not okay, Support from the healthcare team, Nursing school preparation for a pandemic, I would still choose nursing. Novice nurses felt challenged by the experience and were at times overwhelmed and struggling to cope. Support from peers and coping skills learned during nursing school helped them continue to work during a critical time. Data from this study suggest that some participants may have been experiencing symptoms of anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder, and findings provide foundational insights for nursing education and psychological interventions to support the nursing workforce.
23	Repsha, C. L.	2021	<a href="#">The Experiences of Recent Graduate Registered Nurses Working the</a>	N/A	Dissertation	<b>Background:</b> During the COVID-19 pandemic, recent graduate registered nurses (RGRNs) experienced this public health emergency while transitioning from student to professional nurse. Nurses working through disaster situations, including public health emergencies, often

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			<p><a href="#">Frontlines during the COVID-19 Pandemic</a></p>		<p>experience anxiety, stress, fear, and exhaustion. RGRNs facing both the transition to practice and the pandemic simultaneously may struggle with feeling successful in their chosen career, leading to increased turnover. Aim: The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of RGRNs during the COVID-19 pandemic identify how the pandemic has influenced their practice. <b>Methods:</b> This study used a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the experiences of 17 RGRNs who entered the workforce just before the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants worked in acute care and had three to eight months of nursing experience prior to caring for patients with COVID-19. <b>Findings:</b> Increased exposure to death and dying, rapid changes in guidelines and protocols, as well as fear of infecting others contributed to exhaustion, feelings of overwhelm, and isolation. However, RGRNs were already in a learning mindset that allowed them to more easily adjust to changing conditions and participants found the pandemic accelerated their transition to practice. Nurses supported each other both within and outside of work; this need for support within the profession was exacerbated by a lack of support from hospital administration and community members. These experiences led RGRNs to become more committed to the nursing profession but less committed to bedside, acute care roles. <b>Conclusion:</b> This study provided important information on the experience of RGRNs in acute care during a disaster situation. Recommendations for education, practice, health promotion and future research are provided.</p>
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24	Savin, J. C.	2021	<a href="#">Reddit and Nursing During Covid-19: A Summative Content Analysis</a>	Keywords - Reddit, nurses, online, summative content analysis, Covid-19, social media	Journal	<b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this thesis was to explore what self-identified nurses discussed on the nursing SubReddit during the Covid-19 pandemic between March 2020 to May 2020. <b>Methods:</b> The Hsieh and Shannon (2005) summative content analysis with emergent categorical development was used to categorize the naturalistic data. <b>Findings:</b> Through analysis, six content categories were identified from the nursing SubReddit: (a) employers' approaches to the pandemic; (b) emergency preparedness in response to the pandemic; (c) shared experiences; (d) nursing students and new graduate nurses; (e) coping; and, (f) gratitude to nurses. <b>Implications:</b> (a) Leadership that is communication-focused will improve the quality of nursing management; (b) social media can be used on an ongoing basis to learn more about the profession; and, (c) future pandemic and disaster planning for the nursing profession can take insight from the findings of this work.
25	Schivinski, E., & McNulty, D.	2020	<a href="#">COVID-19: A New Reality for Nursing Professional Development Practitioners and Newly Licensed Nurses</a>	N/A	Journal	No abstract available
26	Sessions, L. C. & Ogle, K. T., Lashley, M., & Austin, E. N.	2021	<a href="#">Coming of Age During Coronavirus: New Nurses' Perceptions of</a>	N/A	Journal	<b>Background:</b> The global COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges to the health care workforce. Little is known about the effect of the pandemic on new RNs and their preparedness for such a crisis. This study explored the lived experiences of RNs transitioning from

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			<a href="#">Transitioning to Practice During a Pandemic</a>			students to professionals during the pandemic. <b>Method:</b> Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 new RNs working in acute care facilities during the Maryland COVID-19 State of Emergency. <b>Results:</b> Three themes were identified to describe the experiences of new nurses transitioning to practice in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic: uncertainty, vulnerability, and resilience. <b>Conclusion:</b> New nurses need greater support during transition to practice. Initiatives to improve trusting relationships between new nurses and their organizations and support of the development of essential relationships (e.g., peers, frontline management, and educators) could enhance new nurses' resilience and commitment to stay with the organization.
27	Sherman, R. O., & Labat, A. M.	2021	<a href="#">Managing New Nurse Fear and Anxiety: Simple strategies can help with transition to practice</a>	N/A	Journal	No abstract available
28	Smith, S. M., Buckner, M., Jessee, M. A., Robbins, V., Horst, T., & Ivory, C. H.	2021	<a href="#">Impact of COVID-19 on New Graduate Nurses' Transition to Practice: Loss or Gain?</a>	COVID-19, new graduate nurses, nurse residency program, nursing	Journal	<b>Background:</b> The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted nursing education and required modification of instructional methods and clinical experiences. Given the variation in education, rapid transition to virtual platforms, and NCLEX-RN testing stressors, this cohort faced unique losses and gains influencing their transition into clinical practice. <b>Purpose:</b> This study examined the impact of COVID-19 and

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				students, preceptor		<p>preparedness for professional practice of 340 new graduate nurses (NGNs) at an academic medical center. <b>Methods:</b> This was a mixed-methods descriptive study focusing on how clinical experience loss or gains in the final semester affected the fears, concerns, and recommendations for NGNs. <b>Results:</b> More than half (67.5%, n = 295) of NGNs reported changes to clinical experiences, ranging from 0 to 240 hours transitioned to virtual (n = 187; median, 51; interquartile range, 24-80). NGNs fear missing important details or doing something wrong in providing patient care. They identified the need for preceptor support, guidance, teaching, and continued practice of skills. <b>Conclusion:</b> Recommendations are clear communication with leadership, advocacy from the nurse residency program, and targeted clinical and emotional support for NGNs.</p>
29	Stolzman, B. L.	2022	<a href="#">New Nurse Reality Shock &amp; Early Burnout: Can Role Transition Education Received during New Nurse Residency Positively Affect Satisfaction?</a>	N/A	Dissertation	<p>Newly licensed nurses are at incredibly high risk for reality shock leading to early burnout which results in many of them resigning their positions or leaving nursing altogether. Common feelings leading to reality shock often involve exhaustion, cynicism, depersonalization, decreased self-efficacy, and decreased job satisfaction. The result of early burnout presents significant financial strain and quality concerns for our already struggling healthcare systems. In the 1960s and early 1970s, Marlene Kramer brought her research regarding newly licensed nurses and their experience of “reality shock” to publication. Kramer felt strongly that reality shock was a key factor that led newly licensed nurses to leave the profession. More than</p>

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					<p>40 years later, newly licensed nurses continue to experience the same problems when trying to transition into their roles. The purpose of this project was to examine whether participation in a nurse residency program that actively addressed reality shock and early burnout reduced the incidence of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, depersonalization, and increased newly licensed nurse's sense of personal accomplishment and self-efficacy within the first year of practice. Kramer's "Reality Shock" theory (1974) and Boychuk-Dunschler's "Process of Becoming" theory (2008) was the theoretical framework used as a basis for the educational intervention content. The Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey for Medical Personnel was utilized to assess exhaustion, cynicism, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment among newly licensed nurses. Demographic questions were asked at the beginning of the survey. Questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic were also included as it was recognized that participation in the care of patients during the COVID-19 crisis may have added stressors that would not have been otherwise present. The setting was an education and training center located in Las Vegas, Nevada, that provides centralized education services and a nurse residency program for newly licensed nurses in a seven-hospital system. Forty-five newly licensed nurses completed the initial online demographic survey, COVID-19 survey, and MBI survey. Descriptive statistics using frequency distributions were used to characterize sampled demographics and participant's perception of providing care to patients with COVID-19 during the pandemic.</p>
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						<p>Twenty-six newly licensed nurses completed the educational intervention discussing reality shock and early burnout via a digital learning management system. The educational intervention and surveys were available for 4 months. Twenty-six participants completed the same online MBI survey following completion of the educational intervention. A paired samples t-test was used to analyze data obtained from the pre- and post-intervention surveys. The educational intervention was successful in achieving its overall objectives, but the incidence of burnout did not improve as much as hoped, perhaps due to the unexpected added stress of a nationwide pandemic. Increasing organizational awareness of new nurse reality shock and early burnout through the project contributed positively to development of initiatives to assess and address burnout within the healthcare organization. A system wide retention committee was formed to address engagement and assess and address early burnout of newly licensed nurses within the first year of practice. Raising the awareness of organizational leadership regarding reality shock and early burnout will help support ongoing retention efforts. It is suggested that in the future, in person educational sessions be added to supplement the presentation which will enhance ongoing efforts to assist newly licensed nurses to feel understood and supported through their transition to practice. When they feel they are well supported in their respective clinical work settings, retention occurs.</p>
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30	Suplee, P. D., Jerome-D'Emilia, B., & Linz, S.	2022	<a href="#">The Lived Experiences of New Nurses During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Their Contributions to Nursing Education and Professional Development</a>	N/A	Journal	<b>Background.</b> The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on new nurses' transition to the staff nurse role in hospital settings. New staff nurses were not prepared to care for COVID-19 patients based on their previous nursing education. <b>Method.</b> A qualitative descriptive design with purposive sampling was used for this study. Twenty-nine new nurses were recruited. They were interviewed using a semi-structured guide to elicit data that were coded and analyzed using content analysis. <b>Results.</b> Five themes were identified: "You might have to risk your own life to save others," "I wish I had developed a thicker skin," "There is real world and there is nursing school," "Learning how to handle your own mental health," and "What I would tell them." <b>Conclusion.</b> New nurses described their preparedness from baccalaureate education to clinical practice as insufficient in certain areas that were needed in the care of COVID-19 patients. Nurse educators who teach in pre-licensure and hospital orientation programs can revise or expand on the themes voiced by new nurses in order to improve their transition to the staff nurse role.
31	Urban, R. W., Rogers, M. R., Eades, T. L., Allard, P. M., Porter, M. T., & CIPHER, D. J.	2022	<a href="#">Resilience, Stress, Anxiety, and Depression: Exploring the Mental Health of New Graduate Nurses Transitioning to</a>	N/A	Journal	<b>Background.</b> Transitioning to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic multiplied the stressors and challenges typically encountered by new graduate nurses (NGNs), yet research exploring mental health variables of this subset of nurses remains sparse. <b>Method.</b> This study used an observational design and convenience sampling. NGN alumni (n = 192) from a pre-licensure nursing program were surveyed during the summer of 2021 regarding their experiences with resilience, anxiety, depression, and stress while

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			<a href="#">Practice During COVID-19</a>			<p>transitioning to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. <b>Results.</b> Participants reported moderate to severe levels of stress (76%), anxiety (27.6%), and depression (31.2%) while transitioning to practice. Most (79%) described themselves as resilient. The highest mean scores for stress, anxiety, and depression occurred during the fourth to eighth month of practice. <b>Conclusion.</b> Nursing professional development specialists, managers, and other stakeholders need effective strategies to monitor and promote NGNs' well-being and mental health to prevent burnout and turnover throughout the first year of practice</p>
32	Zhu, Y., Tang, W., Zhang, Y., Li, M., Zhu, W., & Zhang, Y.	2023	<a href="#">Job Satisfaction and Negative Coping Style Affect the Relationship between Transition Shock and Intent to Stay among Newly Graduated Nurses during the COVID-19 Pandemic</a>	N/A	Journal	<p><b>Aim.</b> The study is aimed at exploring the relationship between newly graduated nurses' transition shock, negative coping, job satisfaction, and intent to stay during the time of COVID-19. <b>Background.</b> The shortage of nurses is a global dilemma aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a hot topic in recent years to help newly graduated nurses transition smoothly. Transition shock is one of the essential indicators to describe the transition state of newly graduated nurses, which has a far-reaching impact on the intention of newly graduated nurses to stay in their posts. However, few studies have studied the mechanism behind this relationship, which may affect the effectiveness of retention strategies. <b>Methods.</b> A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted from July to August 2021 in 31 tertiary hospitals in Shanghai, China. Participants comprised a convenience sample of 759 newly graduated nurses for surveys. Structural equation models were used to examine the study's hypothetical model.</p>

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					<p><b>Results.</b> The results showed that transition shock had a significant direct effect on job satisfaction (<math>b = -0.412, p &lt; 0.001</math>) and intent to stay (<math>b = -0.145, p &lt; 0.001</math>). Job satisfaction had a significant direct effect on intent to stay (<math>b = 0.702, p &lt; 0.001</math>). The indirect effect of transition shock on intent to stay through job satisfaction was statistically significant (<math>b = -0.289</math>), the 95% C.I. was <math>(-0.493, -0.357)</math>, and the proportion of mediating effect to total effect was 66.59%. Moreover, the moderated mediation analysis showed that the interaction effect of transition shock and negative coping style on job satisfaction was significant (<math>b = -0.082, p &lt; 0.001</math>). <b>Conclusion.</b> This study revealed the impact of transition shock on intent to stay of newly graduated nurses during the time of COVID-19, and found that job satisfaction played a mediating role and negative coping played a moderating role. These findings are of great significance for nursing managers to take measures to improve the intention of newly graduated nurses to stay. Implication for Nursing Management. The level of transition shock is an important indicator reflecting the transition state of newly graduated nurses, and can further predict the job satisfaction and intention of newly graduated nurses to stay. Therefore, nursing managers should pay attention to taking corresponding measures to reduce the level of transition shock of newly graduated nurses.</p>
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## Appendix B

### New Graduate Nurse Interview Guide

**Demographics**

Age (OR year of birth): \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Level of Education:

Undergraduate  Masters  PhD

Highest Level of Education in Nursing:

Undergraduate  Masters  PhD

Name of Regional Health Authority where employed: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of practice/specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Months of experience as a registered nurse: \_\_\_\_\_

Months of experience in current position: \_\_\_\_\_

Position type currently held:

FT  PT  Casual  Permanent  Temporary

Interview Questions	
1.	Tell me a little about yourself. <i>Prompts: Are you from NL? Do you have family or friends close by?</i>
2.	Tell me about your transition from student nurse to practicing RN <i>Prompts: How did it feel? What kind of challenges did you experience? What kind successes did you experience?</i>
3.	Tell me about your experience starting your first position as a new graduate nurse during COVID-19. <i>Prompts: What was it like being oriented to the unit during this time? How did you feel? Did you find it different from your previous clinical experiences before COVID-19?</i>
4.	How would you describe your mental health and well-being since starting employment as a new graduate nurse? <i>Prompt: What do you think influenced/ impacted your mental health the most during this time? Did you have any challenges? Did you have any strategies you used to help in this regard?</i>
5.	Please describe any supports available to you during this time? <i>Prompts: How were you made aware of these supports? Have you ever used any of the supports available to you? If not, please tell us why. Examples of resources could be: Mentors, confidential services, resiliency programs/workshops</i>
6.	Are there any resources / supports you think would be beneficial in supporting mental health and well-being for new graduate nurses during COVID-19? <i>Prompts: Please describe. When would they be offered? By whom? And how? Please describe the process you think would work best.</i>
7.	Please describe any supports or activities outside of work you use to support your mental health and well-being? <i>Prompt: Are these activities helpful? If so, in what way?</i>

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	<i>If asked, examples of resources could be: family and friends, physical activities (walking or running)</i>
8.	If you could give any advice to a new graduate nurse starting their first position during a public health crisis. What would that be? <i>Prompt: If you could go back and tell yourself something you know now that you wish you knew then, what would that be?</i>
9.	Is there anything else you would like to share or you feel is important for us to know?