

I'm So Over Nursing. I would rather work at Costco!!

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The joy of making a difference in my patients' and family members lives is being overshadowed and diminished by the organization's politics and their #1 priority: keeping the physicians happy and making money. Our purpose as nurses is to provide excellent care and customer service. Our patients are our #1 priority not only just 12+ hours a day or an 80+ hour paycheck, they are always our main concern. Nursing is not patient care anymore, we are becoming the host(esses) of the medical field.

I am ready to leave the nursing profession after 6 years. I have a bachelor's degree in biology and got my associate's in nursing. In high school, I decided that I wanted a career in nursing. By the time I entered college, I decided I wanted to become an OB/GYN. Halfway through college, I realized I didn't want to be a doctor. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do but I wasn't going to change my major and start over. Fast forward about 8 years, I considered nursing and applied to nursing school and here I am.....back at square one. I wish I had sacrificed and endured one or two more years of college by changing my major and pursued something else.



I often-times cringe when I think of going to work. My attitude changes, my heart races, and anxiety sets in. My coworkers are nothing less than awesome. Most of my patients rock. Both have been unexpected blessings to me and I thank God for our paths crossing. But management, the physicians, and the facility at which I work have made nursing a profession that I wished I had not entered. I never have to wonder how devalued I am when I'm at work. Our voices are not heard, and as a matter of fact, our concerns are considered complaints.

Not only am I a caregiver, but I am the business office, auditor, waitress, maid, logistics, IT, quality assurance, babysitter, personal assistant, and the list goes on. When doctors fall short, it is our job to clean the mess up.....and, no, I'm not speaking of mistakes that affect patient care. I speaking of simple documentation that they are supposed to take care of. I understand the importance of having all "I"s dotted and every "T" crossed, but when will the physicians be held accountable? I can't be chasing down physicians when they forget to check the correct box especially when it has little or nothing to do with a patient's outcome.

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That's not my job. We nurses are stressed, afraid, furious, and just plain depressed as a result of these added responsibilities. We already worry about our patients even after quitting time. After leaving work, many of us call back up to the floor or unit checking on our patients. We are genuinely concerned about them, but it is very obvious that management's agenda is not the patients. Whatever management's agenda is becomes our agenda, right? WRONG!!! I'm here to take care of patients, not physicians.

There are so many nurses, YOUNG, fairly new nurses, that I know that started their nursing careers with a clean bill of health. They are now on antidepressants, benzos, blood pressure meds, and others due to the stress and unhappiness. Nursing has gotten away from patient care. It's about making money for the organization which is about making the physicians happy. If that means being stripped of our dignity, we are to do what it takes. I feel as though it is second nature to provide excellent care to our patients. WE have saved many lives anywhere from observing changes in our patients to discovering mistakes made by others (physicians) and correcting them or directing attention to the oversight. I wish they would let us do OUR jobs and provide care and management can run up behind THEIR "customers". If we can keep those two jobs separate, that would be great.

We are a vital part in patient care, but yet, we are so unappreciated and taken for granted. We make a positive impact in many lives, but we are the first ones cursed out because someone is having a bad day. Not only are we unappreciated, but we are very disrespected, and in many occasions we are unfairly belittled and we are just supposed to accept those words because "it's part of the job." I'm done accepting it. I'm reminded everyday there are replacements waiting in line. I'm reminded that any fool can do my job. I don't want a pat on my back every-time I do a great job, just acknowledge that I am a vital part of the team. I understand human resources has a stack of nursing applicants on their desks. I just don't have to be reminded of that every-time all my paperwork isn't on the chart (because I'm still working on it), or if I come back from lunch two minutes late.

I am not cut out to take jabs and low-blows without throwing them back. I have so many responsibilities that I take on from the time I punch the clock to the time I punch out and I refuse to be disrespected by someone with a title because I happen to not move fast enough or I am having to clarify an unclear and, most of the time, an unfinished or incorrect order. I'm helping YOU out!! We genuinely worry and care about our patients that it often consumes us. When a patient codes or expires, we are crushed. I once had a patient who got stuck at least 15 times by various staff members, including physicians, to get IV access. The patient took those sticks like a champ, but I still went home and boo-hooed because I hated to see him go through that. We hurt when our patients hurt. On top of carrying out our responsibility as nurses, we are holding in so much emotion associated with our patients.....yet we get very little to no respect. Don't get me wrong, there are some physicians that I'm in contact with whom are polite and value my opinion and I do appreciate them. Of course I'm not always right or may not make the most intelligent statements, but they acknowledged my voice. Again, I don't want a cookie. I just want to be acknowledged as a professional.

I understand customer service includes dealing with angry, rude, and the dissatisfied. But when I have poured my heart, soul and emotion into my job and my customers and I am still allowed to be mistreated and insulted, then that becomes a problem. I feel I have no rights as a nurse. Who is protecting me? Who is my voice? Who is standing in my defense?

So at this point, it's time for me to bow out from the nursing profession gracefully and while in good standing with the organization, my family, and myself before I am forced out or OD on my meds (or somebody else's). My family, happiness, health, dignity, and peace of mind is worth leaving. They tell me Costco employees never leave.