

5.2.1.1 Recovery of MHCUs.....	63
5.2.1.2 Team work.....	64
5.2.1.3 Passion for caring.....	65
5.2.2 Unsafe working environment.....	65
5.2.2.1 Unpredictability, aggression & assault by MHCUs.....	66
5.2.3 Challenging working environment.....	67
5.2.3.1 Shortage of staff.....	68
5.2.3.2 Increased patient numbers.....	69
5.2.3.3 Workload.....	70
5.2.3.4 Burnout.....	71
5.2.4 Compromised clinical care.....	73
5.2.4.1 Compromised nursing care & dissatisfaction.....	73
5.2.5 Negative experiences.....	74
5.2.5.1 Feelings of being unappreciated and lack of support.....	75
5.3 Conclusion.....	76

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction.....	77
6.2. Summary of findings.....	78
6.2.1 Positive job aspects.....	78
6.2.2 Unsafe working environment.....	79
6.2.3 Challenging work environment.....	79
6.2.4 Compromised clinical care.....	80
6.2.5 Negative experiences.....	81
6.3 Recommendations.....	81
6.3.1 Nursing practice.....	81
6.3.1.1 Increasing work force.....	81
6.3.1.2 Debriefing sessions for nursing staff.....	82
6.3.1.3 Workload.....	82
6.4 Nursing education.....	83
6.5 Further Research.....	83
6.6 Conclusion.....	84



REFERENCES.....85

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Information sheet.....	91
Appendix 2: Consent form.....	94
Appendix 3: Interview schedule.....	95
Appendix 4: Ethical clearance letter (UWC).....	96
Appendix 5: Application letter to Lentegour hospital to conduct study.....	97
Appendix 6: Letter granting permission to conduct study Lentegour hospital.....	99
Appendix 7: Editorial Certificate.....	100

3.3 Research setting

The study took place in two acute admission units (male and female) at a psychiatric hospital in the Western Cape. The hospital operates in the Mitchells Plain Health District of the Metro. It forms part of the Associated Psychiatric Hospitals (APH) in the Western Cape and serves as a referral facility to one third of the province and has a bed capacity of 740 which makes the hospital the largest psychiatric institution in the Western Cape Province. The 740 beds cater for general adult psychiatric services, child and adolescent services, forensic state patient services and intellectual disability services. The acute area where this study took place is divided into two units, mainly male and female acute admission units.

3.4 Target population and sampling approach

3.4.1 Population

Population is defined as the entire group of persons that meet the criteria which the researcher is interested in studying (De Vos, 2006; Brink 2006; Burns & Grove 2005). This study consisted of all nurses working permanently with MHCUs in acute admission units of Lentegeur psychiatric hospital.

3.4.2 Sampling approach

A purposive sample approach was used to select participants from the two admission units (male and female). The reason for selecting this type of sampling is that it selects individuals who will have knowledge about the topic of interest or the phenomenon in question (Brink 2006, p. 133). In this study, participants were nurses who were caring for MHCUs in the admission unit.

Inclusion criteria: Participants were included if (i) they were nurses who cared for MHCUs in either male and female admission units of the hospital, (ii) if they have been working in each of the two units for a period of more than six months on permanent basis.

Exclusion criteria: Participants were excluded from the study if they were nurse managers in each of the units as they were perceived as being not directly involved in providing patient care. Participants were also excluded if they were working in the units as agency staff (part-time) thus not on permanent basis.

3.5 Data collection methods

3.5.1 Recruitment of participants

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the research ethics committee of the University of the Western Cape (see appendix: 4) and from the research ethics committee of the Psychiatric hospital concerned (see appendix: 5). Thereafter, the researcher approached the Operational managers of the respective admission unit to seek out permission to access participants to take part in the study. It was then that the participants were approached by the researcher after obtaining permission from the unit manager individually and set up a meeting with each of the participants where the nature and the purpose of the study was explained. Each participant was given an information sheet (see appendix: 1) and those who agreed to take part were asked to sign a consent form. The information sheet contained the aim, objectives and the questions to be asked during the interviews. It also contained risks and benefits involved in the study and the appropriate measures to be taken in case of traumatized participants. The information sheet explicitly explained that participation in the study was



