

## **Challenges Experienced by the Professional Nurses Working in one of the Mental Healthcare Institutions in South Africa**

**N.P. Mulaudzi**

Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa

**N.S. Mashau**

Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa

### **Abstract:**

Healthcare workers, including nurses, have a duty to provide quality care to their patients without discrimination. However, nurses in mental healthcare institutions often experience challenges in managing mental healthcare users who exhibit violent behaviour. The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges experienced by the professional nurses working in one of the mental healthcare institutions in South Africa. A qualitative approach using an exploratory and descriptive design was employed to obtain a deeper understanding of the challenges experienced by professional nurses. Purposive sampling was used to select the institution and participants. Data were obtained through individual in-depth interviews, and data saturation occurred after 18 participants were interviewed. Tech's open coding technique was used to analyse data, and four themes emerged from data analysis, namely: inadequate safety measures, inadequate resources, impact of high workload, and shortage of staff. The themes were further sub-divided into sub-themes. The study revealed several challenges that professional nurses experience in mental healthcare institutions that might be a barrier to providing quality healthcare. Conducive working environments should be established to enable professional health nurses to provide quality nursing care, thereby promoting the health of mental healthcare users.

### **Keywords:**

high workload; mental healthcare user; inadequate resources; ineffective safety measures.