

# **Registered nurse´s perception of staffing in community care – contributing to a sustainable health care workforce**

**Ingrid Andersson, PhD stud**

*Karlstad University, Faculty of Health, Science, and Technology, Department of Health Sciences*

**Carina Bååth, Professor**

*Karlstad University, Faculty of Health, Science, and Technology, Department of Health Sciences*

*Faculty of Health, Welfare, and Organisation, Østfold University College, NO-1757 Halden,  
Norway*

**Jan Nilsson, Professor**

*Karlstad University, Faculty of Health, Science, and Technology, Department of Health Sciences  
Faculty of Social and Health Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, N-2418 Elverum,  
Norway*

**Anna Josse Eklund, Senior lecturer**

*Karlstad University, Faculty of Health, Science, and Technology, Department of Health Sciences*

## **Background**

Population ageing will lead to increased need for care, both as home care and in nursing homes. The time spent in hospital are shorten, so more and more advanced care takes place as community care. To meet this challenges, it will be important to ensure a sustainable health care workforce in which registered nurses (RNs) have a key role. Staffing in community care is related to patient safety and care quality.

## **Aim of the study**

To describe registered nurse´s perceptions of staffing in community care.

## **Methods**

A number of 56 RNs (age 26 to 65, median age 47) working in community care answered a questionnaire including questions about staffing. Data were collected in 2019/2020. Descriptive statistical- and qualitative content analyses were used.

## **Results**

The majority of the RNs (71%) perceived the planned staffing in community care as acceptable or good. Although, when looking back on the previous week, around half of the RNs (55%) perceived it to be lower that needed. The RNs holds perceptions of staffing in a continuum from positive to negative. The RNs perceptions of staffing are expressed in five sub-themes; “it´s working, it´s all fine,” “the willingness to do good”, “being in a vicious circle”, “having a feeling of resignation”, and “challenging for a vulnerable organization”.

## **Conclusions and implications**

RNs perceptions on staffing in community care are important in contributing to a sustainable and resilient workforce, they are like the organisation's band-aid. There is a need to optimise and increase nurse staffing in community care.