

**Poster Session I  
#2**

***The Perceptions of Retired RNs Regarding Volunteering in Nursing and Non-nursing Roles***

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**Purpose:** To explore the perceptions of retired RNs regarding volunteering in nursing and non-nursing roles.

**Method:** The study was qualitative and exploratory. A purposive sample of 10 retired RNs, over the age of 63 years, was obtained through a hospital quality improvement coordinator in Kansas. Kansas was chosen for this study because it was discovered that a small group of RNs in Kansas had organized themselves into retired nurse volunteers. The study expanded to include retired RNs who were not in the original group. The demographics of Kansas are reflective of the United States as a whole with somewhat less ethnic and gender diversity. Data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously until thematic saturation was achieved. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim.

**Analysis:** Constant comparative analysis was used to develop taxonomy of retired RN perceptions.

**Results:** The following themes were identified: Always a nurse; ability to nurse; giving back and gaining back, changes in nursing, and connecting. The characteristics of retired nurse volunteers and the challenges of volunteering were also identified.

**Conclusions and Implications:** The data support previous research on older adult volunteers and older employed nurses. Retired RNs bring special skills and expertise to their volunteer roles. They have flexibility of time and setting. Healthcare organizations can utilize retired nurses in a variety of ways to take optimum advantage of their experience. Retired nurses can inspire public trust by giving time to patients despite nursing shortages and busy healthcare environments, thereby promoting public health. Retired RNs also enhance their own mental health and self-esteem by utilizing their professional expertise to continue to make a contribution to nursing.