

Compassion Fatigue Education in Italian Nursing Curricula: A Systematic Gap Analysis Driven by Patient Safety Evidence

Gianluca Fedelfranco^{1,2}

¹ Single Access Point and Multidimensional Assessment Unit (PUA/UVM), Social Health Local District, Local Health Authority of Bari (ASL Bari), Bari, Italy

² University of Bari "Aldo Moro", Bari, Italy
(Corresponding Author: gianlucaunico@gmail.com)

Citation: Fedelfranco G. "Compassion Fatigue Education in Italian Nursing Curricula: A Systematic Gap Analysis Driven by Patient Safety Evidence" (2026) *International Journal of Health Supplements* 1(Suppl. 1):80. Supp. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.82051/ijhs-2026-1>

Introduction. Nurse burnout carries measurable patient safety consequences: Li et al. (JAMA Netw Open 2024; 85 studies; N=288,581 nurses) found SMD=-0.58 for missed care and SMD=-0.68 for safety climate. FNOPI Study BENE (2023) documents 60% burnout prevalence in Italian nurses, with 45.2% intending to leave within 12 months. The structural drivers of this crisis are absent from Italian pre-registration nursing curricula.

Methods. Phase 1: systematic document review of 34 Italian accredited nursing programme curricula (Ministry of Health registry 2022-2024) for compassion fatigue, organisational recognition, and structural burnout content. Phase 2: focus groups with N=18 newly registered Italian nurses; deductive thematic analysis using Honneth's recognition theory framework.

Results. Phase 1 preliminary review of 8 publicly available curricula: empathy-related content present exclusively as generic communication modules (0 curricula included recognition theory or systemic burnout frameworks). Li et al. (2024) demonstrate that systems-level burnout interventions—not individual resilience—drive patient safety improvement.

Discussion. Misidentifying burnout as individual failure obscures the organisational recognition deficit as root cause. Italian nursing curricula incorporating Honneth-informed structural frameworks will produce graduates capable of advocating for systemic changes demonstrated by Li et al. (2024) to protect patient safety.

Keywords: Compassion Fatigue, Recognition Theory, Nursing Curricula, Patient Safety, Burnout

© The Author(s) 2026. This abstract is published by iEditore and distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0)

Funding: This research received no external funding. **Conflict of Interest:** The author declares no conflicts of interest.