P3 **MUSCULOSKELETAL COMPLAINTS AMONG NURSES WORKING AT A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN**

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Objectives Musculoskeletal symptoms are common among nurses, and have been linked with physical stresses from patient handling. However, their occurrence depends also on psychosocial factors, and may be influenced by health beliefs and expectations. Most studies to date have been in developed countries. To explore whether there are differences

in developing countries, we surveyed a sample of nurses in Karachi, Pakistan.

Methods We carried out a cross-sectional study of nurses at a tertiary care hospital, using the standardised CUPID questionnaire. Pain prevalence was ascertained for six anatomical sites – low back, neck, shoulder, elbow, wrist/hand and knee.

Results 178 full time registered nurses participated in the study. 73% were women and all were aged less than 35 years. 64% had worked in nursing for 1–5 years and the rest for longer. The most commonly reported site of pain was the low back (43% in the past 12 months and 27% in the past month. This was followed by pain in the knee (19% and 15%), shoulder (20% and 11%), and neck (18% and 9%). 37% of respondents reported pain at more than one anatomical site during the past 12 months. Over 85% of respondents believed that work can cause low back pain, but only 38% have ever heard about RSI, CTS or WRULD.

Conclusions A high proportion of nurses in our study reported musculo-skeletal symptoms, but the prevalence was lower than reported from developed countries. This may reflect differences in health beliefs and expectations.