WHAT ARE YOU LIKE? A PERSONALITY PROFILE OF CANCER/PALLIATIVE CARE NURSES IN THE UK

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Introduction: Occupational psychology has long been concerned with identifying how individuals' particular personality styles may affect success in specific occupations or roles. The role of the cancer/palliative care nurse can be both challenging and stressful. **Aim:** In light of continued problems with recruitment and retention, the aim of the present study was to explore the existence of a meaningful personality profile for nurses who chose to specialise and remain in cancer/palliative care. **Method:** 178 nurses undertaking degree/diploma studies in cancer/palliative care completed the 16PF personality inventory and provided pertinent demographic information. **Results:** The resultant profile suggested that nurses were extraverted, empathic, trusting, open, expressive, insightful and group oriented. Such a profile suggests that they would thrive in an occupation where caring for others and multi-disciplinary team working are important. However, these positive traits are tempered somewhat by a tendency to lack objectivity, be rather cautious and compromising in the face of new ideas and potentially naïve in dealings with more astute others, which may impact negatively on their ability to be full and active members of the multi-disciplinary team. The potential use of personality profiling in the recruitment and retention of nurses into cancer/palliative care is discussed.