Why volunteer as "soldiers" in the battle of quality improvement -
a qualitative study of student supervision in an intensive care unit.

Introduction:
Intensive care nurses (ICNs) have the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to meet the complex needs of intensive care patients and their families. There is an international shortage of ICNs. Research highlights the importance of continuous knowledge development and its effect on nurse retention and recruitment as well as on quality of patient treatment and care. To bridge the contributions learnt in the university, effective orientation and guidance processes are needed. To hold currency in clinical practice, education must respond appropriately to practice requirements and adapt and be tailored to respond to the healthcare needs and trends of a modern health care system.

Aim:
To describe motivational factors in order to improve engagement in student supervision and supervisors’ role as change agents in ICU.

Method:
Qualitative multi-stage focus-group interviews with 20 ICN student supervisors were performed and analysed by means of qualitative content analysis.

Results:
Motivational factors: Student supervision strengthens the ICNs’ and the students’ professional identity, as well as their voice in interprofessional discussions, triggers positive energy, and stimulates the ability to continuous reflection. The student supervisors enjoyed to be a part of change and development. They wanted influence on quality improvement processes. Leaving the comfort zone to join the battle of quality improvement is required when supervising ICN students. Support and appreciation from leaders and colleagues are of utmost importance.

Reference
Hansen BS. Gundersen EM. Bjørnå GB. Improving student supervision in a Norwegian intensive care unit; a qualitative study. 2011 Nursing and Health Sciences 13(3):255-261.