



COLLEGE OF NURSING
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE



KNOWING ABOUT AND CARING FOR PERSONS RECEIVING HOSPICE CARE: THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF NURSES WORKING IN HOSPICE AGENCIES

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Background

- Quality of life is supported by linking the science and art of nursing (Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association, 2011).
- Knowing can enhance caring and improve “dignity and quality” (City & Labyak, 2010, p. 26) .
- A critical element of caring is knowing (Mayeroff, 1971)
- Characteristics of caring connect the nurses’ knowing to the patient (Kelley, Docherty, & Brandon, 2013)

Review of Literature

- Nurses knowing the patient included topics relating to care, connection, and proficient practice (Zolnierek, 2014)
- Knowing the patient is characteristic of expert nurses (Radwin, 1996)

Conceptual Framework

- Boykin and Schoenhofer's (2001) nursing as caring theory
- Liaschenko and Fisher (1999) typology of knowledge
 - Case knowledge
 - Patient knowledge
 - Person knowledge
 - Social knowledge

Purpose of the Study

Common meanings embedded in the experiences of nurses working in hospice agencies were revealed and provided insight about the specialty of hospice nursing.

Research Question

What are the experiences of nurses working in hospice agencies in knowing about and caring for persons receiving hospice care?

Methodology

- Design: Descriptive phenomenology
- Setting:
 - Individual face-to-face interviews
 - Multiple hospice organizations

Methodology

- Participants
- Purposive sampling
 - < 2 years experience working in a hospice agency: 2 nurses
 - \geq 2 years but < 5 years: 4 nurses
 - \geq 5 years but < 10 years: 3 nurses
 - \geq 10 years experience in a hospice agency: 5 nurses
 - 14 registered nurses working in hospice

Demographic Information

- 14 Registered Nurses
- Time as a registered nurse: mean of 17 years
- Average age: 48.5 years
- Nursing education
- 7 currently certified in hospice and palliative nursing
- Years employed at current hospice agency: mean 8 years

- **A DIFFERENT KIND**
 - “not just little clinical skills”
 - you are a nurse
 - “all about the care of a person”
 - team approach
- **KNOWING**
 - learning about
 - knowing the case
 - knowing the patient
 - knowing the person
 - knowing the family
 - experience matters
- **“IT’S A CALLING”**
 - “the guide on the journey”
 - rewarding
 - “this is where I belong”
- **“SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME”**
 - connection
 - gift of presence
 - “if we listen, we can learn so much”

Theme

Knowing

SYNTHESIS STATEMENT

Implications and Recommendations for Nursing Education

- End-of-life care in curriculum
- Clinical management of individuals with life-limiting illness
- Inclusion of all ways of knowing

Implications and Recommendations for Nursing Practice

- Teamwork
- Identify nurses' educational needs
- Self-care strategies
- Experience

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

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Questions

Invitation for Questions from the Audience

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