



Sek Ying Chair



Elizabeth Papathanassoglou

EDITORIAL

Sek Ying Chair, Elizabeth Papathanassoglou

Nursing practice: where research should start from

We have always been advocating for critical care nurses and practitioners to conduct research, as research could generate knowledge and evidence to inform practice and facilitate professional development. Nursing research has experienced remarkable growth in the past decades. However, many problems, especially questions in clinical practice, are still waiting to be addressed through high quality research.

Many nurses and practitioners who have been dedicated in clinical practice usually ask 'how to start nursing research in critical care'. In fact, many excellent nursing studies have originated from practice. Clinical nursing research is designed to guide nursing practice and to improve the health and quality of life of nurses' clients (Polit & Beck, 2008). It is recommended that nurses and practitioners start conducting research from their familiar areas, especially research arising from clinical problems in their own clinical specialty. With rich clinical experiences and strong expertise in critical care, nurses and practitioners are more sensitive to the problems in practice and the needs of the clients; the key sources of research questions.

The papers in the current issue are good examples of clinical nursing research. The authors observed problems in clinical practice, which inspired them to initiate nursing research, finding evidence to address or to understand the problems. Given the increased anxiety level among patients undergoing cardiac catheterization, one paper reviewed current evidence to assess the effectiveness of using non-pharmacological interventions to address anxiety in this group of patients. Another article summarized the factors that influence the quality of life among patients with mechanical heart valve prosthesis, which would help health care professionals to take effective measures to improve their quality of life. Based on their working experience in an emergency department, authors in Hong Kong identified the service gap between their current practice and diagnostic strategies for risk stratification of cardiac chest pain patients. Therefore, they conducted an evidence-based literature review to develop a chest pain protocol to enhance risk stratification for acute cardiac chest pain. Another paper noticed the increase in radiation exposure among patients in an intensive care unit. The authors conducted the research to better understand the current exposure to conditions and predictors, which would indicate

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strategies to minimize patients' exposure to radiation.

The main focus of Connect is clinical practice. Nurses and practitioners are suggested to initiate research in critical care from the clinical questions and needs of practice. In this way, clinical research will promote the advancement of the critical care nursing specialty, which is also one of the founding principles of Connect.

Reference

Polit DF, Beck CT (2008). *Nursing Research: Generating and Assessing Evidence for Nursing Practice*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

EDITORS

Prof Sek Ying Chair (Hong Kong),
E-mail: sychair@cuhk.edu.hk

A/Prof Elizabeth Papathanassoglou
(Canada), E-mail: papathan@ualberta.ca

EMERITUS EDITOR

Prof Paul Fulbrook (Australia),
E-mail: paul.fulbrook@acu.edu.au

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Ms Laura Alberto (Argentina), E-mail:
lauramalbert@yahoo.com

A/Prof Sandra Goldsworthy
(Canada), E-mail: sandra.goldsworthy@ucalgary.ca

Dr Esther Wong Yee Hing (Hong Kong),
E-mail: wongyh@ha.org.hk

Prof Violeta Lopez (Singapore),
E-mail: violeta_lopez@nuhs.edu.sg

Dr Shelley Schmolgruber
(South Africa), E-mail: shelley.schmolgruber@wits.ac.za

Prof Janet Wing Hung Sit (Hong Kong),
E-mail: janet.sit@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof Colleen Norris (Canada),
E-mail: colleen.norris@ualberta.ca

Ms Kathleen Vollman (USA), E-mail:
kvollman@comcast.net

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