It is difficult to believe that our newsletter The Insider: A Look at Collaborative Research is going into the third year of publication and even harder to believe that we held our fifth Collaborative Research Day just last month.

What is evident though is how much our research has grown over the past number of years and the many research projects that our members are involved in at present. In this newsletter we highlight some of those achievements that we celebrated at the Research Day Conference whether it is research that has been piloted or completed or some projects that are just beginning. The research varied as to substantive area and the presentations covered such topics as nursing work life issues (novice nurses, health promotion and well-being of nurses, and men’s choice of nursing as a career), important nursing education questions (different models of preceptorship and how to understand and recognize scholarship in nursing), special populations and needs (college students barriers to personal health, older adult’s and family’s response to relocation of the older adult, aging and IT use, seniors’ issues in the community, use of ‘therapy’ dog for patients in the pediatric setting, meaning of low gestational weight gain for pregnant women, and psychosocial needs of women having outpatient surgery for breast cancer), heart health approaches (impact of hypertension education or balance as a strategy for heart health), policy development (promoting healthy weights, promoting safe drinking water, and regional health needs), theory development (how therapeutic relationships are established in the context of public health nursing practice and how workers manage work-related musculoskeletal disorders), knowledge transfer (helping families deal with chronic pain) and last but not least a methodology focus (how institutional ethnography can assist to explore a complex area like community treatment orders).

There was also great variation in the type of research methodology that was used as was evidenced in the studies and ranged from qualitative methods (naturalistic inquiry, institutional ethnography, Heideggarian interpretive phenomenology, grounded theory, focus group, and metasynthesis), to quantitative methods (repeated measures, cross sectional survey, randomized control trial), and also evaluation research using qualitative and/or quantitative approaches. Most if not all of the research presentations had evidence of collaboration and this too varied from collaboration among academic units or disciplines and Schools of Nursing to collaboration with community partners. Some of the collaborations were within an academic unit or school and some were international in scope. The research varied too in purpose as some was aimed at knowledge generation and others at knowledge use or knowledge transfer. While we saw a great deal of variation on many facets of our research where we saw less variation was in the quality of the research. It really was quite impressive to see the depth and the breadth of our research and how far nursing research has come in this province in just a fairly short period of time. We are definitely in good “research” shape and well positioned to contribute to the health needs of the province and beyond through our nursing research. This is not a call to complacency but a call for sustained effort in our nursing research. However, this edition of our newsletter is indeed a celebration of our research accomplishments, individually and collectively, and we look forward to highlighting other research activities that we heard about on our nursing research day as we continue with the publication of our newsletter. In the next edition we hope to introduce some researchers and their work in a particular area. And as always we look forward to hearing more from any of you about your research activities. We can inform and celebrate.
In this section of our newsletter we will highlight some of the faculty research that is currently either completed or a work in progress and that was presented at the October 2, 2010 Nursing Research Day. The information presented is taken directly from abstracts submitted and for many attending the presentation and meant to very briefly capture the research. If you would like more information on any of these studies please contact one of the researchers.

Western Regional School of Nursing
Judith Wells presented two studies from research she has been involved with on the west coast of the province. “Change in Functioning of Older Adults Following Relocation to an Alternate Level of Assisted Living” and “From Institution to ‘Home’: Family Perspectives of a Unique Relocation Process” by Judith Wells, Kelli O’Brien, Carla Wells, and Darlene Hutchings will inform practitioners and policy makers, and other researchers on how relocating older adults with mild to moderate dementia to a more homelike setting may result in a change of function for these individuals and how families perceived this relocation. This is an excellent example of taking good advantage of a natural experiment that all too often we do not capture and yet doing so can provide valuable information not only for the local context but others thinking about this type of care for dementia. The first part of the study used a repeated measures design beginning with the 41 residents first relocated to the new setting. While there were no significant differences between scores on admission versus 6-8 weeks after relocation, there were variations in scores between the two measures and importantly no negative changes noted and this in a condition marked by deteriorating in functioning. The second study used phenomenology with 10 family members and six themes relating to ongoing communication, relief and contentment, meaningful activities, enhanced environment, improved functioning and engaged staff; the themes presented suggested positive feelings by family members about the relocation process.

Marilyn White presented “College Students’ Perceptions of Barriers to Personal Health” from her and Paula Didham, Sue Froude, Madonna Manuel, and Linda Norman-Robbins’s research. These researchers designed an exploratory study using focus groups to engage 19 college students in discussions on health needs and learning preferences. Three groups of students (those living off campus, those living in chalets, and those living in residence) took part in the focus groups. The findings from the study will inform the work of a Wellness Centre at Grenfell Campus that members of the School of Nursing have been running for the past decade. Lifestyle (nutrition and exercise) and disease prevention (cold and flu) were important topics to address and residence life and effects on health seems to demand greater attention.

Centre for Nursing Studies
Nicole Snow presented on “Using Institutional Ethnography to Explore Community Treatment Orders”. This was an exploration of how a proposed methodology and in this case Institutional Ethnography (IE) can help us better understand the use of a controversial form of treatment known as Community Treatment Orders (CTOs) for individuals with mental illness. For those not familiar with CTOs Nicole defined them as mandatory orders for individuals living in the community who have a mental illness and are expected to comply with treatment, e.g., medications and other therapy, even against the affected individual’s will. In particular the study will examine and map out the different
social influences that govern the everyday actions around use of CTOs in an in depth and systematic way. We look forward to the findings of this research.

Jill Bruneau examined a common occurrence in many women’s lives in her presentation on “Achieving a Balance: Strategies to Improve Heart Health for Multi-tasking Women” that of the demands placed on women with multiple responsibilities. She also presented some of the strategies that women may use or as nurses we can help women use in order to have less negative effects of stress on our hearts. This is an example of knowledge translation at its finest and how we use what we know about heart health to improve women’s lives and engage in disease prevention.

The third presentation from colleagues at the Centre for Nursing Studies was Understanding and Recognizing Scholarship in a Nursing College presented by Gladys Schofield from her and Fran Abbott, Denise English, Patricia Grainger, Anne Marie Lewis, Nicole Snow, and Lorna Walsh who came together as the Centre’s Scholarship Committee to take on the challenging issue of defining scholarship within nursing. They used Boyer’s many facets of scholarship and how these apply within their nursing program. The presentation stimulated a good discussion. The presentation was also a good fit with our workshop presentation the previous day by our keynote speaker, Kathryn King, from the University of Calgary who held a workshop on the many faces of scholarship.

The fourth presentation was a collaborative project between faculty at the Centre, Ann Marie Lewis and Patricia Grainger, and a colleague at Memorial School of Nursing, Erin Glynn, and was entitled “Implementation and Evaluation of a ‘Faculty resource Model’ in Preceptorship”. While analysis is a work in progress the stimulus for the project being evaluated was the challenge of getting preceptors for the number of nursing students we have in our program and the need to look at different models of clinical teaching. From the beginning reports of all involved, the approach suggests a positive outcome and we look forward to the final results of this important study.

Memorial University School of Nursing
The first presentation was on a collaborative project between Victor Maddalena and Anne Kearney entitled “Quality of Work Life for Novice Nurses” and uses a naturalistic inquiry approach. Study findings confirm that the novice period when the new graduate is entering or re-entering practice is both a stressful and exciting time for the individual. Some of the sources of stress identified by the novice nurses, such as lack of mentoring and inadequate orientation, can be addressed in a programmatic way so the transition period can be less stressful.

The second presentation “Health Promotion Profile and Well Being of Nurses in NL by Lan Gien on behalf of herself and her research team, Stephen Bornstein, Scott MacKinnon, Sandra LeFort, and Cheryl Haslan also focused on nurses (n = 264) and compared that group of workers with 422 other workers across the province. Preliminary findings were presented on selected health promotion activities, access to health promotion and occupational health services, and feelings towards work.

The third presentation was on “The Impact of the Hypertension Education Program on Blood Pressure and Self-efficacy to Change Health Behaviours in Men and Women with Hypertension” by Judith McFetridge-Durdle, Brenda Tucker, and Colleen O’Connell. The presentation was on findings from a randomized controlled trial that evaluated an educational program on hypertension on selected indicators the program was designed to help individuals change. Health-specific self-efficacy increased in the treatment group, as did measures of sodium in the urine, while other measures (blood pressure, serum lipids, weight, BMI, and waist measures) were not different between groups.
The fourth presentation by Doreen Dawe on behalf of her co-researchers, Lorna Bennett, Doreen Westera, and Anne Kearney, on “Psychosocial Needs of Women Who Have Surgery for Breast Cancer as an Outpatient”. This was a qualitative study with 20 participants who experienced this surgery and the findings suggest areas where we need to focus care and include such as the value of choice, the role of meaningful social support, and recognition of personal strengths.

Another presentation to note was co-presented by Creina Twomey and Robert Meadus “Why Men Choose Nursing: The Atlantic Perspective” and based on their research in this area and included both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The question is important in order to target recruitment efforts towards men, a largely untapped source for increasing the number of professional nurses.

Cindy Murray presented “Trying to Find Peace in The War between Beauty Ideal and the Sanctity of Motherhood: The Experience of Low Gestational Weight Gain”. This phenomenological study suggests that weight gain in pregnancy is a very complex area and greater understanding of the phenomena can lead to how we can approach these women as well as societal attitudes.

The last noted presentation was also on healthy weights. Wendy Young presented “Healthy Weights: Halton Takes Action’ Evidence-informed Policy and Program Development, implementation and Evaluation” on behalf of her team Healthy Weights: Halton Takes Action Research Team. The presentation focus was on the development, implementation, and evaluation of the project and some of the outputs from this research, Healthy Weights Report Card and recommendations for municipal councilors.

In addition to the oral presentations there were 8 poster presentations:

Constant Negotiating: Working with Chronic Pain from Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders – Development of a model to explain how workers who have chronic pain due to work related musculoskeletal disorders are able to negotiate on multiple levels and remain at work. Joanne Smith-Young, Shirley Solberg, & Alice Gaudine. Also presented at the 13th World Congress on Pain, August 29-September 2, 2010

A knowledge Transfer Project for Families with and Adult Member Suffering With Chronic Pain – Sandra LeFort, Shirley Solberg, Joanne Smith-Young, & Shannon Gordon. Also presented at the 13th World Congress on Pain, August 29-September 2, 2010

Sustaining Information Technology Use by Older Adults to Promote Autonomy and Independence – Wendy-Young, Stephen Bornstein, Veeresh Gadag, Gerald Farrell, Lan, Gien, George Klima, & Stephen Tomblin.

Welcomed Visitors: An Evaluation of the Janeway Therapy Dog Program – Lynn Cooze
Promoting Safe Drinking Water – Sandra MacDonald, Judy Blakeley, Lorna Bennett, Donna Best, & Creina Twomey
Community Health Needs and Resources Assessment in NL Canada: Seniors Issues - Sandra MacDonald, Judy Blakeley, Lorna Bennett, Donna Best, & Creina Twomey

Community Health Needs and Resources Assessment in the Central Region in NL Canada - Sandra MacDonald, Judy Blakeley, Lorna Bennett, Donna Best, & Creina Twomey

Targeting Essence: Pragmatic Variation of the Therapeutic Relationship - Caroline Porr

**Interprofessional research collaboration begins to unravel how to live long and healthy with Multiple Sclerosis**

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is the most common neurological disease affecting young adults in Canada. It is most often diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 40, during the career and family building years. MS is characterized by a slow worsening of balance and coordination, paralysis, fatigue, pain, and other neurological symptoms. There is no cure at present. The most common question individuals with MS ask their care providers is ‘What should I expect in the future?’ Although there is increasing evidence that nutrition, exercise and social engagement improve quality of life, it is not well documented what people with MS can do to live long and healthy with their disease.

The study team of Dr. Michelle Ploughman (Physiotherapist, MUN Postdoctoral fellow and Eastern Health Clinical Research Scientist), Dr. Anne Kearney (Nurse, Educator and MUN Researcher) and Michelle Murdoch (Disability Advocate and Nurse) are working together to understand health, lifestyle and aging well from the patient’s point of view. They are analysing text from interviews with 18 older people from the Northeast Avalon who are living with MS. These men and women have over 600 years of combined experience living with MS and are a wealth of knowledge about living and aging successfully with a chronic disease. Preliminary results indicate that work and social engagement and ability to finance health-related expenses weigh prominently as factors contributing to healthy aging. Furthermore, medications, use of complementary therapies, and degree of disability do not seem to be as important as social support and resilience when facing the long term challenges of living with MS. Findings from this study will help physicians, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and other health providers to provide evidence-informed advice to people aging with MS.

The research team also consists of Dr. Mark Stefanelli, Neurologist and Director of the Provincial MS Clinic and Dr. Marshall Godwin, Director of the Primary Healthcare Research Unit at MUN. Together, the research team, from varied educational, clinical and research backgrounds, hope to continue their work in community self-management of chronic disease and disability for the benefit of the people of Newfoundland & Labrador. Their research was supported by the Medical Graduates Student Society Dr. W. Ingram Award, Eastern Health and the Neurology Research Fund. If you would like more information on this project, contact Dr. Michelle Ploughman at michelle.ploughman@easternhealth.ca or by phone 777 2099. **Anne Kearney**

**Email:** akearney@mun.ca
Emotional Loneliness and Social Isolation In Community Dwelling Seniors: Implications for Healthy Aging (Abstract)

The absence of companionship and social contacts for community dwelling seniors, and the subsequent feelings of emotional loneliness and social isolation are significant risk factors that can have an impact on healthy aging. This study used a population health approach to assess the community health needs and resources of four community health regions, in an effort to plan healthy public policies and population health initiatives. A descriptive, exploratory research design was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data from 2,283 household surveys, 87 key informant telephone interviews, and 27 focus groups sessions. In relation to the seniors’ population, findings indicated that participants were generally satisfied with the health and community services available for seniors. However, loneliness and social isolation were identified as major community health concerns for the seniors’ population. Recommendations from this study included designing, implementing and evaluating community based intergenerational population health strategies and initiatives for seniors.

Sandra MacDonald
Email: smacdon@mun.ca

Carla Wells, WRSON, is part of a Visioning Group with provincial stakeholders working towards the establishment of a Centre on Aging for Newfoundland and Labrador. A Seed Grant of $20,000 was just awarded (April, 2010) to the group with Dr. Leslie Cake, Department of Psychology, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University, as its Principal Investigator. The title of their funded project is: “Building an Evidence-Based Framework for the Development of a Newfoundland and Labrador Centre on Aging.” Co-investigators are: Carla Wells, Dr. Sharon Buehler, Kelli O’Brien, Gail Wideman, Dr. Michelle Ploughman.

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.
- Author unknown
Paula Rolfe, WRSON, presented a poster entitled "Transformational Leadership Theory: What every leader needs to know" at the 2010 Nursing Leadership Conference in St. John's on April 19-20. Paula also presented this poster at the 4th National Community Health Nurses Conference held June 16th - 18th, 2010 at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel.

The following individuals from CNS have presented at the ARCASN Annual Conference:

- Vicki Earle and Kathleen Stevens, “Mingling with the theorists: Synthesizing theoretical knowledge with first year nursing students.”


- Kay Barrington, “Letter writing in nursing education”

- Kathleen Brophy and Lorna Walsh, “The dorsogluteal site for intramuscular injection: Why it should be taught as part of the curriculum in undergraduate nursing education programs.”

- Anne Marie Lewis, “Conflict in preceptorship: A case study and analysis.”

- Maureen Harris and Karen Hutchens, “Integrating information literacy into nursing education through collaboration.”

- Sue Ann Mandville Anstey, Vicki Earle, Pamela Ward, and Patricia Grainger, “Student nurses’ knowledge and attitudes toward caring for the elderly.”

- Kelly Power-Kean, “Connecting the pieces: A novice research experience.”

- Pamela Ward and Kathleen Stevens, “Teaching foot care across the continuum of nursing education.”

The following individuals from CNS have presented at the Eastern Health Nursing Research Symposium:

- Irene Barry, Jill Bruneau, and Wanda Emberley Burke, “Innovative E-Learning Technologies Prepare Learners for the Challenges of Nurse Practitioner Practice.”

- Peggy Rauman, “A Safety Awareness Program (ASAP): Educating Nurses on their Rights and Responsibilities in the Creation of a Safe and Healthy Workplace.”

- Maureen Harris and Karen Hutchens, “Integrating information literacy into nursing education through collaboration.”

- Michelle Earle-Crane, Christa Sutton-Ralph, and Patricia Grainger, “Post Basic LPN Medication Administration Proficiency: A Preceptorship Model in Action.”

- Kathleen Brophy and Michelle Earle-Crane, “Learning to Lead: Putting Theory to Practice.”

Marilyn Beaton and Jeanette Walsh presented a paper and poster presentation at the International Perspectives in the Nursing History Conference held at the Royal Holloway University of London in Surrey, England in September, 2010. The paper was entitled Experiences of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) who immigrated to Newfoundland and Labrador; and the poster The Challenges and Rewards of the Internationally Educated Nurse (IEN) acting as a client advocate in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The conference was held to mark the 100 anniversary of the death of Florence Nightingale and began with evensong at St. Paul’s Cathedral followed by a laying of a wreath at her tomb in the crypt of St. Paul’s and a reception at the newly restored Florence Nightingale Museum. Three hundred and fifty nurses from across the world attended and the focus of the conference was the influence of Florence Nightingale in the development of nursing worldwide.
News


Nicole Snow had the opportunity to present at the 6th European Congress on Violence in Clinical Psychiatry, in Stockholm, Sweden, October 21-24, 2009. “It was a busy conference as I was fortunate to have three abstracts for oral presentation accepted: The Media’s Impact in the Ethical Care of Violent Individuals with Severe Persistent Mental Illness; The Ethical Dilemmas in Exploring Power and Coercion to Manage Risk in Community Mental Health Practice, Difficult Decisions; and Families of Individuals with Severe Persistent Mental Illness Experiencing Mandatory Treatment. This content draws heavily from my proposed PhD research concerning ethics and mandatory treatment in mental health. This conference not only drew delegates from countries all over Europe, but also Canada, the US, and Australia, to name a few. The conference was enlightening as the various different philosophical and ethical approaches guiding care of individuals exhibiting violent behaviors ranged from what could be considered very coercive to open and liberal. Discussions were lively at times and there was much to be learned and shared.” The next congress is planned for Prague, Czechoslovakia, in the fall of 2011.

Nicole Snow
Email: Nsnow@cns.nf.ca

Donna Moralejo is involved in a research project in Haiti: Les determinants de l’abandon de la vaccination dans le departement des Nippes, Haiti. Investigators: E. Jean-Baptiste, Y. Jacques-Biamby, K. Pétion, D. Moralejo, & J. Chauvin. This is a collaborative project between the Canadian Public Health Association and the Haitian Public Health Association. It is funded by the International Development Research Council (Canada). Information can be found at: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-140707-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.

Have a Laugh!

Things you don’t want to hear during surgery

Anyone see where I left the scalpel?

Everybody stand back! I lost my contact lens!

Nurse, did this patient sign the organ donor card?

Better save that. We’ll need it for the autopsy...
McGill University School of Nursing presents Nursing Explorations 2010—Nursing Our Profession Back to Health: Creating high retention environments., November 5, 2010, 7:30 AM—4:15 PM at the Holiday Inn Montreal Midtown, 420 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, Canada. Nursing Explorations is a “must attend” for nurse managers, front-line nurses, nurse administrators, human resources personnel, clinical nurse specialists and nurse practitioners, educators in the community, nurses, and nursing students. For more information about this conference please visit: http://www.medicine.mcgill.ca/nursing-exploration2010 or contact the Conference Secretariats via phone 1-866-661-0880, Fax 1-866-340-7773, or email explorations.nursing@mcgill.ca

Sixth Australian International Conference on Motherhood ‘Mothers at the Margins’, April 27th – April 30th, 2011, University of Queensland, St. Lucia Q 4072, Brisbane, Australia. If you are interested in being a presenter, please send a 200 word abstract and a 50 word bio by November 30th 2010 to: Dr. Marie Porter (m.porter@uq.edu.au) This conference is interdisciplinary. Please send the abstract as an attachment, not in the body of the email; give it a title, or put your name on it; please do not just put ‘abstract’. International presenters must be/become members of MIRCI

Email: info@motherhoodinstitute.org
Website: www.motherhoodinitiative.org


Noerager Stern, P. Porr, C. (2010). Essentials of Accessible Grounded Theory. Phyllis Noerager Stern and Caroline Porr provide the most accessible description of grounded theory methods to date in this brief, clear, and useful guide. Based on the foundational work of Barney Glaser, the volume reflects the complexity of conducting grounded theory research—not something that can be done ‘by the numbers’ - while offering much-needed help to younger scholars and community-based researchers in using the method effectively in practice.


Ask the Researcher…

Is it acceptable to submit the same abstract for presentation at different conferences?

The question of whether or not it is acceptable to submit the same abstract or virtually the same abstract for a number of presentations, also known as duplicate presentations, is an important question for consideration and really does not result in an easy or clear answer (Bhandari et al., 2005; Pop et al., 2009). The guidelines on duplicate publication are quite clear; it is against the ethics of publication to submit the same paper or virtually the same paper for publication in different journals. However, the literature and guidelines around duplicate presentation is far from clear. In fact there is perhaps more folklore or opinion on duplication presentation than good guidelines on how to approach this issue. Additionally guidelines to help, if they do exist, are certainly more difficult to find. On one side we find those arguing that duplicate presentations are acceptable. The reasons cited are that many conferences have different participants and audiences, i.e., local or regional, national, and international or even communities of scholars, and since we need to get our research disseminated widely, presenting at conferences primarily aimed at these different audiences would help us accomplish that purpose. Another argument put forth is that it is the “rewards system”, and “the publish [which subsumes presentation] or perish” mandate forces us into this less than desirable situation. Our institutions and funding agencies ask for and indeed demand widespread dissemination. On the other side arguing against duplicate presentation is that it goes against the understood purpose of conference presentations and that purpose is getting out “new” research in a more immediate manner than we can through publication and enables us to get feedback from peers to incorporate into a publication. An additional argument against the practice is that duplicate presentation submissions may also prevent a new submission from being accepted, thus preventing another researchers from benefitting from the main purpose of a conference presentation. To decide how to approach the issue posed in the opening question requires a solution on the part of conference organizers as well as the authors/submitters of the abstract for presentation. Conference organizers need to make it clear what is acceptable or not regarding the nature of submissions and just as journal editors do, conference organizers may need to require the authors to state if the work has been submitted previously for a presentation and to what conference. Authors/submitters need to make sure they meet the purpose of the conference and call for submissions. If the purpose is not clearly stated they need to make sure there is no attempt at deception, i.e., merely changing the title of the submission or changing the order of the authors. If nothing else in the abstract changes this suggests a less than honest approach. If the material has been already published it simply does not belong in a conference, as it is not new or even nearly new. If the motive is to show you are an active scholar, be aware that duplicate presentations do not count in the same way as a new publication. Rather you need to put your energy into a new publication. There is room for a limited number of both presentations and indeed publications from a single study, but before you do so make sure there are real differences, you meet ethical requirements, and adhere to any requirements of conference calls and journal publication requirements.
Let’s talk…

Often it is a comment that you hear about research that suggests you really need to address a particular research issue or question. For this newsletter that issue or question is “what is a theme?” Recently I heard a comment about a particular methodology allowing a researcher to provide research findings on a deeper level than “merely identifying a theme” and that comment caused me to really think about and look into the question “what is a theme?” and equally important “what does it mean to identify a theme?” If we look at the Oxford English Dictionary theme is defined as “1. Subject of discourse, conversation, composition etc., or 2. (mus.) Subject, tune, or passage developed in musical composition, and recurring as a principal part of its material” [emphasis added] (p. 881). In research books we find such definitions of theme as “a term used to describe the meaning of a recurring unit or category of data that is central to the presentation of the findings” (Doordan, 1998, p. 122), “A recurring regularity emerging from an analysis of qualitative data” (Polit & Beck, 2004, p.734) or “Used to describe a structural meaning unit of data that is essential in presenting qualitative findings” (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011, p. 455). Perhaps a simplified definition is that a theme is a meaning unit. A theme seems to be a representation of something that is important in our data. Some textbooks on qualitative research suggest further that themes or thematic analysis are common to all qualitative research methodologies. However, if you read books on a particular methodology the word theme may or may not be used. For example in van Manen’s (2007) Researching Lived Experience, the subject of theme and thematic analysis is discussed in depth and I would direct you to pp. 78-100 for an excellent discussion on the topic of themes at least as applies to that particular phenomenology. In grounded theory neither Glaser or Strauss (1967) nor Strauss and Corbin (1998) have the word “theme” in their indices because these textbooks are aimed at developing theory and we do not usually refer to a theme as part of a theory, but talk about concepts instead. Charmaz (2008) does use the term “theme” in grounded theory to distinguish between those who use this methodology to describe “patterns” they observe in their data and present as findings in contrast with those who go on to build actual theory, whether at the substantive or formal level. There is often good reason to stay with describing or being descriptive even in grounded theory as often the level of data we have collected does not permit us to go beyond that level. In that sense we are similar to quantitative data that is measured at the nominal or categorical level and appropriately use descriptive statistics. Whether or not we are doing grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, discourse analysis or action research or whether or not we consciously acknowledge the step, we begin with looking for patterns in our data or as many describe use thematic analysis; in these instances the word theme is often used interchangeably with pattern. After all, pattern suggests there is some systematic happening and

References:


Both papers outline some of the arguments for and against duplicate publications mentioned in this response. See http://publicationethics.org/files/u2/all_flowcharts.pdf for duplicate publication and other ethical issues related to publications. Conference organizers may be silent on this issue as there is a financial pressure to generate enough income to at least break even from a conference event despite the rising costs of conference fees.
evident in our data that will help us understand a phenomenon. We are really attempting to put structure in our data and make sense of that data both for ourselves and for others. In some instances the sense we make out of our data may be a description or even interpretation and a theme might be the best way to capture our findings. A theme is really quite complex if done well and represents the meaning we can attach to our data; there is no “mere theme” in this type of research. As a representation of our data it is important that we put in the effort to do this part of our analysis well because it will influence any other steps in our analysis. Themes do not “emerge” on their own as sometimes researchers suggest but are the result of good insight, hard work, and a solid knowledge base used in the creative endeavour of identifying themes. Themes have limitations as van Manen (2007) observes “No thematic formulation can completely unlock the deep meaning, the full mystery, the enigmatic aspects of the experiential meaning of a notion [experience]” (p. 88), yet it can provide a good tool for helping us to understand and give meaning to the experience or indeed other phenomenon. I would suggest the same is true for any other representation of our data however we name that representation. Going back to the definitions cited above a theme and identifying a theme is therefore an extremely important means of capturing and representing something essential or central to our data. The critical step, whether we use the term theme or not, is that we understand what high quality data are and attempt to collect same, are well prepared and knowledgeable about our methodology and substantive area so that we our research is meaningful.

References:


Nursing Research Crossword

ACROSS
2 Objectively verifiable event, object, or property.
5 Demonstrating credibility, auditability, and fittingness.
6 Barszen and Graff (1985) describe this as ‘invention and art’.
8 Characteristics of samples.
10 Interpretive understanding.
11 No significant difference.
15 Immersion.
18 Often used as primary source materials.
19 Intentional communication a person uses.
20 Element relating to the ideal.

DOWN
1 Mean of the discriminant scores for a given group.
3 The probability of making a type 1 error.
4 Provides a way of knowing the past.
7 Breaking a norm.
9 Asymmetrical distribution.
12 Keeping subjects and observers unaware of treatment assignments.
13 Average.
14 Large values indicate poor model fit.
16 The visual representations of frequency distributions.
17 Not a forgery.

Check the next newsletter for the answers to this puzzle!

Please send submissions for the next edition of the newsletter to: Joanne Smith-Young Email: jsmithyo@mun.ca