

QUEERING WHOLE PERSON CARE

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This workshop is the product of a research study exploring the strategies that queer people develop to navigate hegemonic, heteropatriarchal health care systems, and ways that nurse education can incorporate a narrative-based, whole person care approach to understanding and supporting the needs of queer patients. This mixed-methods study included interviews with queer people, nurse educators and practicing nurses; textual analysis of queer health narratives; close reading of queer, feminist and cultural theory; and autoethnography.

Some of the questions that we will explore are: How do queers use personal narratives to help navigate health care systems not designed to see/meet their needs? How do queers challenge dominant power structures in medicine? What does whole person care look like in a queer context? What would nurses like to see included in nursing education, and what do queers want health providers to know? What are the key pedagogical challenges in attempting such communication?

The stories that queer people carry with them to medical encounters are a rich and underutilized resource for health care providers and a tool for patients trying to manage serious or chronic illness. We will explore methods for including storytelling in nursing education as well as patient care, and participants will engage in a narrative medicine/autoethnographic exercise.

We hope participants will leave our workshop with a better understanding of queer peoples' experiences of health care, and ways that queers and nurses can work together for better health outcomes. ■

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