

## BACCN Research Symposium Abstract

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### **Using Phenomenology to explore student nurses experiences of spiritual care.**

#### Background

Spiritual care is viewed as integral to holistic nursing practice but studies suggest that most nurses feel unprepared to deal with spiritual needs (Cooper et al 2013). Initial findings of this phenomenological study, where student nurses discuss their experiences of spiritual care, will be outlined in this presentation including exemplars that are relevant to critical care practice.

#### Aim

The presentation will discuss phenomenology as a methodological approach and initial findings around student nurses experiences that have transformed their understanding of spiritual care.

#### Methodology

Phenomenology (Van Manen 2014) was chosen for this study as it draws of the lived experience of participants to develop an understanding of the phenomena being explored. This approach fits with the research aim to understand aspects that transform students understanding of spiritual care. Students volunteered to participate in the study and were interviewed using a semi structured schedule to allow exploration of their experiences. Ethical approval was gained before starting data collection.

#### Analysis

The use of interpretative analysis will be discussed considering the benefits and limitations when used in phenomenological research (Todres & Holloway 2010). Exemplars from the study will be used to identify key issues around learning about spiritual care. Potential implications for critical care practice will be outlined.

#### Results

Phenomenological methods produced some rich descriptions exploring spiritual care. Currently, students are talking about practice based experiences as the main medium that changes their understanding of spiritual care. Students are influenced by good staff role models and individualised patient care. The trustworthiness of phenomenology as an approach will be discussed.

#### Summary

This presentation should enable delegates to consider the use of phenomenology as a research approach, particularly related to spiritual care practices.

#### References

Cooper, K.L.; Chang, E.; Sheehan, A.; Johnson, A. (2013) 'The impact of spiritual care education upon preparing undergraduate nursing students to provide spiritual care'. *Nurse Education Today*. 33. 1057-1061

Todres, L. & Holloway, I. (2010) 'Phenomenological Research'. In: Gerrish, K. & Lacey, A. (Eds) *The Research Process in Nursing*. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. pp 177-187

Van Manen, M. (2014) *Phenomenology of Practice*. USA: Left Coast Press.