

Title: Leadership engagement for emerging nurse scholars

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Hospitals, communities, and academic institutions each requires engagement by nurse researchers in research leadership positions. Leadership, which is an influential process within a group setting, involves goal achievement within a groups' shared vision (Hafsteinsdottir, van der Zwaag, & Schuurmans (2017). Research leadership encompasses the shared vision of research among nurse scholars to improve the health of all people through science and innovation (Midwest Nursing Research Society, 2019b). Unfortunately, for a novice, exposure to research leadership may have been limited during education and training. A lack of mentored leadership experiences may lead emerging scholars to feel overwhelmed by and unprepared for involvement in these opportunities when they arise.

Experience with research leadership helps both the individual nurse scholar and the institutions or organizations to which they serve. As individuals, engagement in research leadership can open doors to further training, promotion, or additional leadership opportunities both through serving the organization and through the mentorship and networking that naturally occur. For example, evidence of leadership is a requirement to be able to apply to be an Academy Jonas Policy Scholar (Oerther, Hallowell, Rossiter, & Gross, 2018). In academic settings, leadership is usually a requirement for promotion and tenure. Institutions and organizations also benefit from, and are dependent on, new individuals becoming experienced in research leadership to bring new vision and ideas. Certainly, young scientists with leadership skills are needed to move the research agenda of our discipline forward as we strive to meet the ever-changing demands of healthcare.

Research Leadership in Academic Settings. Academic settings offer a variety of options when considering research leadership for emerging scholars. Schools of Nursing and Universities are in need of individuals, across the career span, to serve on committees. Of importance to emerging scholars, the participation in committees provides opportunities to meet others from across the university, expanding professional networks which may lead to increased collaboration.

Many regional nursing organizations such as the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) have specific opportunities aimed at increasing research leadership opportunities for emerging scholars. MNRS is dedicated to the development of scholars, to driving science, and to leading innovation to improve the health of all people (Midwest Nursing Research Society, 2019). The Emerging Scholars Network (ESN) of MNRS is a committee tasked with creating and maintaining an infrastructure for expanding student,

post-doctoral, and early career member engagement (having less than 3 years of experience in a practice/research position). A key goal of MNRS is to engage our emerging scholars in a mentored program of research leadership early in their training. The benefits of engaging doctoral students and new graduates and introducing them to leadership within a research society are numerous. Among these benefits are the fresh perspective and energy emerging scholars bring to our society. Emerging scholars can promote new and creative ideas to enhance current programs. They represent future regular members of the organization, which allows the organization to grow and thrive. Experience in a friendly, mentored leadership position within a network of other student and newly graduated scholars allows the individual to fully enjoy the organization while preparing the scholar for future leadership roles. It is, as they say, a win-win proposition for both parties.

Specifically, there are a number of opportunities within MNRS designed to provide mentored leadership for emerging nurse scholars. Early career scholars can serve on the ESN Executive Committee or as institutional liaisons, which serve as mediators between their School's early career members and the ESN committee and MNRS at large (Midwest Nursing Research Society, 2019a). Furthermore, leading a research interest group (RIG) can grow your experience in organizing and running meetings and building your professional network. Each of these experiences provide support from the organization to successfully engage in the position while developing leadership skills..

Involvement in research leadership is not restricted just to MNRS. Getting involved in research leadership opportunities can occur at any career level from undergraduate students to seasoned researchers. For students, deciding on which leadership opportunity is a good fit for you professionally and within your time constraints is best done in collaboration with your mentor and/or career advisors. Emerging scholars can participate in a myriad of research leadership opportunities in clinical, community, and academic settings (See Fig. 1). Of note, these opportunities have overlap between settings, providing an important strength: Diversity of thought and background can further organizational missions.

Research Leadership in Clinical Settings. Nursing research leadership in a clinical setting involves engaging nurses and multidisciplinary colleagues, impacting patient/health outcomes, and influencing culture to value nursing research. Engaging busy clinicians in research can be a challenge, but opportunities exist for mentoring nurses in scholarly activities and facilitating research collaborations between clinical and

academic experts. Health systems are considered ideal laboratories for translational nursing research -- the study of implementation of evidence into practice (Weiss, Bobay, Johantgen & Shirley, 2018). Nursing research leaders are perfectly positioned to lead translational research teams aligned with institutional values and goals. Early involvement of students and emerging nurse scientists through clinically-oriented research leadership, journal clubs, institutional review board membership, scholarly mentoring, and related activities can benefit the healthcare system by informing clinical practice standards, stimulating practice-based knowledge development, and impacting health system reputation and Magnet® status. Reciprocally, the benefits to the emerging scholar in a clinical setting may be clinical-academic collaborations, clinical teaching opportunities, leadership experience, and service to professional colleagues.

Research Leadership in Community Settings. Community settings offer unique and diverse opportunities for nurse researchers to engage in leadership roles. Due to the service-oriented nature of the nursing profession, students and practitioners often already volunteer or work with community-based organizations (e.g., places of worship, schools, senior centers, nonprofits). Innovative research leadership opportunities can emerge when nurse scholars combine their relationships with these local, regional, and national/international organizations with their passion for improving client and population health at the grassroots level (Hassmiller & Quinn, 2015). Research leadership in these settings can facilitate the development of new approaches, new research questions, and creative problem solving that benefits communities and science.

The importance of these community research roles is acknowledged by prominent nursing organizations, such as Sigma Theta Tau International's Nurse Leader membership option (Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, 2019). Budding nurse scholars and students may feel more comfortable taking on their first leadership role in a smaller, more familiar community setting, rather than the academic setting. Other nurse leaders are inspired and energized by the opportunity to engage in "real world research" and advocacy that directly benefit a community, often in interprofessional settings like community health fairs or student-run health clinics (Peate, 2018). Community research leaders are able to create and implement the most current evidence-based modalities in specific groups of people, going beyond dissemination in peer-reviewed journals and academic conferences to increase the visibility of nursing research in the general public (Peate, 2018). Senior nurse scholars can use their

relationships with community organizations to introduce students and early career nurse scholars to less traditional avenues to build their own networks, identify areas of need, and take on research leadership positions.

In conclusion, involvement in research leadership opportunities is essential for enhancing science and strengthening the voice of nursing. Participating in such opportunities does not need to wait; rather, emerging nurse scholars have many opportunities to advance their leadership skills. As identified, research leadership occurs across clinical, community, and academic settings with involvement at local, regional, national, or international levels (See Fig. 1). Engaging in research leadership opportunities has implications for the nursing profession as well as for the individual. Finally, emerging scholars partnered with senior scholars can connect each other with relevant opportunities for leadership. Join our discussion on Twitter for more ideas and post your responses to the following with the hashtags #ESNchat #NurseLeaders: What research leadership opportunities are you involved in? Where is your expertise needed?



Figure 1. Engagement opportunities for research leadership. This figure shows a selection of opportunities for research leadership in clinical, academic, and community settings, with significant overlap between these settings. Nursing research leadership is additionally on a continuum of local, regional, or global, with needs for emerging scholars at every level.

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