SATELLITE HAEMODIALYSIS NURSES’ PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY NURSING CARE: A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

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August 2009
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I, Paul Norman Bennett, declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided.

________________________________________  _______________
Signature                                      Date
Thank you to my two principal supervisors Dr Jane Neill (2005 to 2009) and Professor Judith Clare (2003 to 2005). Without your wisdom and guidance I would not have completed this thesis. You both gave me the confidence when I needed it most. Thank you to Professor Charlotte de Crespigny (2006 to 2009) and Dr Jacqueline Jones (2003 to 2006) who provided me with valuable critique in their role as second supervisors. In addition, I would like to thank my colleagues, students and staff at Flinders University for their support. In particular Dr Ann Hoffmeyer and Dr Alison Hutton, who gave me support and guidance at vital times during my candidature.

Thank you to nephrology nursing colleagues from Australia and around the world who have patiently listened to my theories, nodding at the right times.

Thank you to the participants and management of the satellite dialysis unit where I undertook the ethnography. You know who you are even though I can not identify you. You took a risk and allowed me to interview and observe you going about your day in the unit. Your honesty and openness were vital components of this study.

Thank you to my sister Vicki, mother Val and father Norm, for their support before and during this study. You have played a significant role in shaping my critical questioning ethic.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you for the support of my long suffering family: Denise, Sam and Finlay. Now you can have the study back.
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LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS
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Publications

Bennett, PN. & Neill J. 2008 Nephrology Nursing Care: Beyond Kt/V *Nephrology Nursing Journal* 35:1 33-37


Dermody, K. & Bennett PN. 2008 Nurse stress in hospital and satellite haemodialysis units *Journal of Renal Care* 34:1 1-5


Bennett, PN. & Glover, P. 2008 Video Streaming: Implementation and Evaluation in an Undergraduate Nursing Program. *Nursing Education Today*. 28:3 253-258

Presentations

July 2006  Renal Society of Australasia 34th National Conference “Quality Haemodialysis Nursing Care: More than Kt/V” Melbourne, VIC

June 2008  Renal Society of Australasia 36th National Conference “In-centre dialysis nurse stress is different to satellite dialysis nurse stress” Sydney, NSW

Sept 2008  European Dialysis and Transplant Nurses Association/ European Renal Care Association 37th International Conference “Bad bridge building: a critical examination of Kt/V and nephrology nursing” Prague, Czech Republic


August 2009  4th Health in Transition International Conference on Community Health Nursing Research Community dialysis nursing: A critical ethnography. Adelaide, SA. (Accepted abstract)
The following fonts and abbreviations styles have been used to present the excerpts from the participants. This also includes excerpts from my own field notes.

**Quotes from data**

All names in this thesis are pseudonyms. Quotes are indented. Pseudonym name, date and transcript line identifier are provided and identify the excerpts from the participant interviews or observation.

For example:

*You tell em time and time again. You know, don’t drink so much coz if you drink your little heart blows up and it can only do that for so long (Lesley28/04 #1655).*

**Field notes**

Field notes are identified and structured in the same manner. FN is used to identify field notes. Regular font refers to my own comment, italics refers to the original field note.

For example:

*If a nurse has two misses then another more experienced nurse should be asked to cannulate (FN 29/3 #35)*
ABSTRACT

People living with end stage kidney disease require dialysis or kidney transplantation to maintain life. Of those receiving dialysis in Australia, most people receive this treatment in satellite haemodialysis centres that are nurse-run, community-based clinics. Nurses provide the majority of care in these clinics with little or no on-site medical support, yet there has been minimal research exploring nursing care, or perceptions of nurses, in the satellite haemodialysis context. The major aim of this study was to explore satellite dialysis nurses’ perceptions of quality care. Fundamental to this aim was the premise that to improve nursing care, nurses need to understand the factors influencing satellite dialysis nursing care.

A critical ethnography exploring the culture of one satellite haemodialysis clinic, focusing on the nurse’s perception of quality was undertaken, with a focus on issues of power that influenced satellite dialysis nursing care. Over a period of twelve months, interviews with nurses, non-participant observation and document analysis were conducted. Of particular concern was the satellite dialysis nurses’ struggle with the dominant medical discourse of quantitative measurement of quality. Bourdieu’s notions of habitus, field and practice provided a vehicle to explore nurses’ dispositions that operated within the institutional conditions of the medicalised discourse and physical structure of the satellite dialysis environment.

Findings about nurses’ perceptions of quality dialysis care were categorised into three broad themes: what is quality; what is not quality; and what affects quality. Nurses considered technical knowledge, technical skills and personal respect as characteristics of quality. Long-term blood pressure management and arranging transport for people receiving dialysis treatment were not seen to be quality priorities. The person receiving dialysis treatment, management, nurse and
environment were considered major factors influencing and determining quality
dialysis nursing care. Acceptance by nurses about their position and their reluctance
to challenge medical power was revealed.

Aspects of power and oppression operated for nurses and people receiving dialysis
treatment within the satellite dialysis context, and this environment was perceived by
the nurses as very different from hospital dialysis units. Bourdieu’s notions of
habitus and subconscious reproduced practices were embedded in the satellite
dialysis nurses’ behaviour and were conveyed to other nurses. In order to improve
nursing care in this context, ten recommendations were proposed: 1) implementing a
concordance nursing care model; 2) using a goal-setting framework; 3) increasing
staff rotation between dialysis units; 4) improving satellite dialysis unit design;
5) educating satellite dialysis nurses in internet and database skills; 6) using new
technologies in staff education programmes; 7) recognising increased patient acuity;
8) research exploring residential dialysis facilities; 9) introducing advanced practice
nurses in a satellite collaborative model of care; and 10) requiring a structured
programme of reflective practice.

Facilitating change in dialysis nursing practice was fundamental to this study and
consistent with a critical approach. New understandings for the nurses may not result
in practice change however, unless there is a collective review and uptake of these
practices. This study offers new knowledge about quality nursing in satellite
haemodialysis units, enabling nurses to critically reflect on, and improve, the quality
of care they provide.