

THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH IN NURSING

AMY E. GRIFFIN

Professor, Faculty of Nursing
The University of Western Ontario

The Third National Conference on Research in Nursing was held May 21-23, 1974 in Toronto. It was sponsored by the School of Nursing, McMaster University and by the Faculties of Nursing, University of Toronto and The University of Western Ontario. It was funded under National Health Grant No. 613-1015-72. The Planning Committee comprised: Dr. Margaret Cahoon (Chairman) and Dr. Helen Carpenter, University of Toronto; Dr. Ruth MacKay and Mrs. May Yoshida, McMaster University; Miss Sheila Creegan and Dr. Amy Griffin, The University of Western Ontario. Mrs. Marion Barter functioned as Program Co-ordinator and Sister Jeanne Forest as Translator. Dr. John Godden and Mr. Robert Randall, of Medi-Edit Limited, Toronto, assisted the Planning Committee in preparation of the pre-conference kit, conference materials and published precedings.

The theme of the Conference was Decision-Making in Nursing Research. The objectives were as follows:

General Objectives — to enable each participant to:

- (1) Share knowledge, skills and attitudes about the research process and about on-going research activities.
- (2) Analyze those determinants which influence the making of decisions in nursing research.

Specific Objectives — to enable each participant to:

- (1) Identify those decisions which influence the development of a research proposal.
- (2) Develop the ability to appraise critically the decisions in a proposal.
- (3) Propose solutions to specific problems arising out of the use of human volunteers.
- (4) Explore some design decisions in interdisciplinary investigations.

- (5) Analyze the outcomes of decisions which influence research design:
 - (a) the sampling plan
 - (b) identification and measurement of variables
 - (c) collection of data
 - (d) analysis of design
- (6) Identify potential sources of consultation and other sources in funding and research design, including statistics.
- (7) Consider the decisions made in writing and publishing research reports.

It was recognized that individuals attending the Conference would vary in their interests and research expertise, that each would bring to the Conference the potential of a unique contribution and would take from the formal program and the informal contacts what best met their individual needs. These factors influenced the devisement of a varied program.

Dr. J. D. Hamilton, Vice-Provost, University of Toronto, opened the Conference. Miss Marjorie Simpson, B.A., S.R.N., O.B.E.* delivered the keynote address, titled "Quest for Excellence." She delineated the ways in which research can contribute to excellence in nursing, emphasized the needed relationship between the nurse researcher and the nurse practitioner, discussed factors to be considered in the quest for excellence in research and criteria for its assessment, contrasted the contribution and stage of development of descriptive and experimental research in nursing, considered needed attributes of nurse researchers and referred to certain ethical considerations. Her concluding statement emphasized the need for nursing research and interdisciplinary research conferences but warned that these need to promote provocative controversy rather than destructive strife.

Dr. Helen Carpenter was the dinner speaker the second evening. Her topic was "The Power of an Idea." In this she outlined the approach to a development of research in nursing in Britain which she observed while on sabbatical leave. She paid tribute to Miss Simpson for her creative, zealous and productive efforts in its promotion.

Additional special guest speakers and their areas of consideration were as follows:

Professor Horace Krever, The University of Western Ontario —
Access to Patients and Other Human Subjects.

* Miss Simpson has recently retired from the position of Nursing Officer (Research), Department of Health and Social Security, England.

Dr. W. Harding LeRiche, University of Toronto — Proposals as Viewed by an Independent Researcher.

Dr. John Godden, Medi-Edit Limited — Writing and Publishing the Report.

The format for the majority of the program comprised the highlighting of research projects by individual nurse researchers involved in their design and implementation followed by plenary or small group sessions. These projects were at varying stages of development and completion. They were selected from approximately fifty submitted to the Planning Committee by nurse researchers in various education and service agencies for their relevance to the following areas of decision-making in nursing and for interdisciplinary research: development of a proposal, appraisal of a proposal, designing a study, collecting data, analysis of data. The pre-conference kit had included descriptions of all studies considered at the conference so that participants could come to the conference with a frame of reference for each study, speakers could selectively focus their brief presentations and the audience could direct comments and questions to specific areas within the context of each total project. Following is a list of the projects discussed and the investigators involved in their conduct:

M. Allen and M. B. Kravitz — Design to Evaluate Model of Nursing Across Primary Care Settings — A Comparative Systems Approach

R. Coombs — Development and Implementation of the Nurse Clinician Role.

R. Cunningham — An Analysis of the Supervisory Process in Middlesex - London Health Unit.

L. Degner — The Life-Prolonging Dilemma: Its Impact on Patients, Families and Health Practitioners.

K. G. DeMarsh, A. J. (Nancy) Anderson and P. E. Poole — Effects of a Specific In-Service Education Program for Registered Nurses on Patient Welfare and Hospital Operation.

S. MacPherson, S. French and V. Marshall — Evaluation of a Psychosocial Program Being Implemented in a General Hospital.

H. Glass — Use of Clinical Facilities by Nursing Students in the Province of Manitoba.

C. Gow and J. J. Williams — A Survey to Determine the Perceptions of Death and Dying Among Community Health Nurses and Hospital Nurses at the Staff Level.

L. Levesque — Evaluation of the Effects of a Preoperative Teaching Program on Patients for Elective Surgery.

R. C. MacKay, E. R. McNeely and H. W. Beatie — Interaction of Health Professionals With Patients With Peripheral Vascular Disease.

M. Phillips and L. Turner — Patient's Perceptions of Selected Feelings of Nurses and Nurse's Self-Disclosure.

K. vonSchilling — Early Evidence of Maternal Attachment.

Dean Joan M. Gilchrist, McGill University, summarized the Conference at the close of the final session. An evaluation questionnaire was completed by 87% of the participants. Responses were reassuring in terms of meeting the general objectives of the Conference, with an anticipated indication of somewhat less success in meeting all the specific objectives for all participants. Respondents underlined their sincere interest and feeling of freedom to comment frankly by incorporating many helpful, specific and forthright suggestions for themes, programming and conduct for possible future conferences. One respondent made the following particularly heart-warming comment:

"I do not think the values of this Conference is reflected in or can be assessed by those Specific Objectives. It was an extremely worthwhile and well planned conference and offered more than these objectives indicate."

Two respondents voiced the feeling of many when they said, "I was pleased to see young researchers in action" and "Keep the young ones coming".

It is anticipated that the next conference may be held in the "Golden West." Dr. Shirley Stinson, University of Alberta has already conferred with Dr. Margaret Cahoon to gain the benefit of her Planning Committee's experience and to consider feedback from participants. It is understood that plans for the Fourth National Conference on Research in Nursing were at least in the embryo stage within a few weeks of the conference herein reported. There is firm widespread confirmation that Canadian nurse researchers are earnestly seeking the kind of mutual sharing and learning which such conferences promote and facilitate.