

TUESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 1999

Teaching Lecture

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Research in oncology nursing: The way forward

P. Di Giulio¹. ¹*Istituto Mario Negri, Divista dell' Infermiere, Milan, Italy*

Research has the role of generating knowledge that enables clinicians to deliver safe and effective care. Particularly in nursing criticisms have been advanced on the fact that Research has the role of generating knowledge that enables the nurses to make decisions. In nursing criticism was advanced on the fact that research initiatives have not focussed on meaningful or relevant clinical problems, and therefore nurses lack research based responses to patients' problems. In nursing in fact we often mourn the lack of evidence upon which to base our practice. Although evidences exist on the relevance on an increasing number of studies that are and have evaluated the effectiveness of nursing interventions through quasi experimental or experimental studies, there is need to test nursing interventions or ensure practitioners make use of the evidence currently available. Nurses are challenged by the changes and progresses in cancer care but also by the organizative changes in the delivery of health care. They therefore need to develop a multifaceted research strategy to:

- * describe the epidemiology patients problems, in order to document the unanswered problems.
- * develop research networks in order to implement trials to evaluate the effectiveness of nursing interventions
- * develop a qualitative approach in order to deepen the understanding of the meaning of the illness and its treatment for the patient
- * explore the influence that the environment (the caring environment, the organization of care) have on patients
- * improve the communication in the with the patient and the oncology team.

Plenary Lecture

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The research practice interface

Anne Marie Rafferty. *Centre for Policy in Nursing Research, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel st, London WC1E 7HT, United Kingdom*

The rise of the evidence-based movement and a National Health Service (NHS) R&D strategy a watershed in practice in the UK context. But what are the assumptions about dissemination and audience that underpin these twin strategies? The introduction of clinical governance means a shift from more permissive to prescriptive policy and practice regimes. A plethora of technologies have been developed and deployed to promote the implementation of research into practice; guidelines, protocols and care pathways. Together these 'tools' of knowledge management are designed to regulate practice through a performance culture revolving around reward and retribution.

The aim in this paper is to consider the extent to which research evidence can regulate practice, specifically reduce variation in performance. It argues that lessons can be learned from the research policy literature that can help to shape expectations of what might be achieved.