



NURSING RESEARCH

– strategies to achieve excellence in the provision of knowledge-based nursing care





FACTS

Swedish Society of Nursing is the professional organization for nurses and represents the profession's areas of expertise with a view to promoting research, education and development and quality development in nursing. The Society is a national association and a forum for Swedish nurses with about 76 000 members. Its activities focus on nursing science and the implementation of new knowledge in nursing. The Society also works with healthcare ethics, nursing work development and management, and nursing education at basic, advanced and research level. The Swedish Society of Nursing believes that qualified training and research, ethical values and quality of work in healthcare are important preconditions for good nursing and care.

The Nurses Scientific Council is an advisory expert body within the Swedish Society of Nursing on matters relating to knowledge-building in nursing science, research and education.

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NURSING SCIENCE

Nursing is a science that deals with human beings throughout their life-cycle - from birth to death. The research is focused on generating knowledge about health-promoting nursing care in order to develop, maintain and improve health, and how care-providers can alleviate suffering and create conditions for a peaceful death. The research concentrates on patients' and their relatives' needs, resources for nursing and the nursing environment, as well as nursing from an organizational perspective. The nursing research results aim to promote renewing and improving nursing care both nationally and internationally regardless of the care-providers.

Premises for the strategy are that

- patients, relatives and carers who are involved in the research will have the ability to influence the implementation and use of the research results.
- nursing research is characterized by an openness to new ideas and issues, review of past ingrained beliefs and practices, and high societal relevance.
- research is creative and innovative, of high quality and carried out together with other knowledge areas.
- research results shall work against the health inequalities related to national and international geographic and socio-economic factors as well as gender and ethnicity.
- development of knowledge regarding global health, understanding of different cultures and national as well as global issues affecting health care are best promoted through international collaborative research.
- researchers in nursing have the readiness to act and the knowledge to initiate, participate in and direct quality improvement within the areas in which the research has been conducted.
- nurses should conduct research as a natural part of their clinical professional work.

STRATEGIES

The Swedish Society of Nursing is working

to ensure that resources for nursing research is strengthened. Government funds shall be allocated both to basic and applied nursing research. Nursing research shall also be funded by research foundations, contract research and other external funding along with research funds assigned to care-providers.

to ensure that nursing science as a discipline has good prerequisites for continuing development in creative research environments. Nurses and doctoral students doing research should work cross-cultural as well as multi-disciplinary.

to ensure that special efforts are made for post-doctoral positions and positions such as research assistants. This would give Ph.D. nurses the opportunity to qualify for the competence of associate professors and professors. Senior researchers are vitally important for the development of knowledge and supervision.

to ensure that all nursing students shall have contact with research projects during their training to be inspired to continue their research education in parallel with their clinical work.

to ensure that individuals with nursing research competences are included as members of the review groups that assess applications for research funding. The fund providers should guarantee that within the review groups there are individuals with the necessary specialist competences and the skills to assess the scientific quality.

to ensure that nursing research findings and their importance for the quality of nursing are disseminated within the health care sector and to the general public, on a national and international level. This is possible, for example, through the public media, popular scientific publications, via the Internet and through national and international conferences.

to ensure that nursing research is conducted thematically in strong research environments in collaboration with various disciplines within health and care. Nursing researchers at various educational institutions should increasingly work together on larger, strategic research projects that can compete for major research grants, such as EU funds.

The Swedish Society of Nursing believes

that universities should establish clinical positions such as professors and senior lecturers in close collaboration with health care. This will facilitate and improve collaboration between education, research and health care.

that health care providers (county councils, regions, municipalities and private care) should establish positions for PhD nurses. The collaboration between care, research and education is crucial for the application of new knowledge and the development of competence within the profession. This will enable systematic evaluations of nursing work.

that the necessary preconditions are created in order to allow clinically active nurses to obtain research education. Thereafter they should be provided with the opportunity to combine clinical work, management and research.



PRIORITY AREAS FOR BETTER HEALTH

Children's and young adults' health

The rising illness among children and adolescents with stress, bullying, abuse-related and other psychosocial problems emphasize the need for research into their environment and health. The knowledge of how illnesses can be prevented and how support can be given to children and their relatives must be enhanced.

Mental Health

The need to obtain knowledge in order to prevent mental illness, violence and lifestyle-related diseases such as alcohol and drug abuse, stress, and obesity is very high. To a large extent there is no research-based knowledge about mentally-disabled people and their relatives' need for support and care. There is also a lack of knowledge regarding housing and good living environments for people with mental disabilities.

Needs of the elderly and healthcare

The provision of care to the elderly is in urgent need of renewal that allows for the application of scientific and reflective, experience-based knowledge. The need for research into the elderly has a strong correlation with the demographic trend towards an increasingly ageing population. Nursing research into needs-based care and good nursing environments for the ageing individual population needs to be enhanced.

Needs of families and relatives and the provision of care

When someone is affected by poor health, so too are the lives of their close relatives. The need to gain knowledge into the needs of the family, the close relatives and their life situation are urgent as the relatives take a greater responsibility for providing care.

Patient and relatives with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Within a multi-cultural society like Sweden, carers increasingly interact with patients from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds than their own. In order for care to be patient centred, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the problems which patients and their relatives face in a country with a new language and cultural differences.

Priorities for the provision of safe healthcare

To provide safe healthcare, healthcare resources must be efficiently and wisely used in relation to the assignments and resources available. The setting of priorities is still concealed to a large extent, without being based on knowledge and is seldom discussed in relation to the goal related activities. There is a considerable need within multidisciplinary research to systematise knowledge about setting priorities at different levels. Additionally, the identification and evaluation of the ethical aspects of decision making needs to be discussed.

National quality registers

National quality registers present a unique opportunity to measure and determine if the care provided meets the patient's needs for safe and secure care and treatment. Furthermore, national quality registers form the basis for records research and improvement efforts. However, to a large extent, they lack evidence-based nursing variables and indicators, thus limiting the possibility to carry out development and improvement work within nursing. For national comparisons, there is a need within nursing research to use relevant measurement outcomes.

Nursing Informatics

Nursing research is an important part of a multidisciplinary research, which evaluates the impact of information technology on individuals and their opportunities for health. A well developed and implemented information and communication technology (ICT) increases accessibility to healthcare and may lead to a cost-effective use of resources. Documentation about, and communication between patients and care-providers, as well as between different care-providers, will be safer provided that an agreed terminology is used. To create new electronic aids that facilitate and simplify everyday life for patients and their relatives is another part of the nursing research.

Global perspective on nursing

Comparing nursing studies in different countries is of great importance for achieving evidence-based care in the increasingly globalized world of healthcare. Through international research cooperation Swedish nursing research can contribute to the strengthening of knowledge about the factors contributing to positive global health development. The efforts regarding global health are an important factor in achieving the millennium goals – the UN's goals to halve world poverty by 2015. The skills of nurses and midwives are crucial for this development. Nursing research has great potential and plays a significant role in developing knowledge of the very best care for all patients, regardless of ethnicity, class, age, gender and religion.

Intervention and implementation research

Within nursing research, interventions are used to try new nursing methods and models for good and safe provision of care. Effective and sustainable healthcare is achieved by identifying needs and strategic alliances between research and clinical activities. Research should be conducted so that it both generates knowledge and speeds up the process of applying new knowledge. This research aims to narrow the gap between what we know and what we do.

Meta-analysis and meta-synthesis

Evidence-based nursing care is promoted by the meta-analysis and meta-synthesis of published scientific studies. The purpose is to summarize and disseminate research findings and conclusions based on the accumulated scientific literature. By enabling nurses to gain access to these meta-analysis and meta-synthesis the implementation of evidence-based care is facilitated and promoted.



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