

EVIDENCE-BASED CARING THROUGH THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIPS1

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Introduction

The therapeutic relationship of nurses with diabetic patients in the practice of care is essential for professional performance. The nurses remain 24 hours in the care of the patients, they provide assistance of biological, technical, psychological, social and spiritual nature and the personal relations support the carrying out of their activities. Several authors (Watson, 2011; Cibanal&Carballal, 2010; Cormier & Cormier, 2008) consider that the personal relation has a therapeutic effect, in some cases affirm that this can be determinant in the success of performance (Watson, 2011).

In the course of this discussion a review of concepts related to therapeutic relationship was carried out, followed by the search for relevant articles related to the subject. The studies give an account of experiences developed in various spaces of professional practice, with patients suffering from diabetes and based on different theoretical positions. This review of narrative type (Guirao-Goris et al., 2008) explored the form and circumstances in which the nursing staff relates to their patients, since the knowledge of this reality will allow to identify strengths, weaknesses and potentiality in the exercise of this personal interrelation that is exercised between patients and health workers. The recognition of the conditions in which personal relationships are established leads to the reflection and search for proposals for the performance of a higher quality practice (Müggenburg&Riveros-Rosas, 2012).

The therapeutic relationship with diabetic patient is chosen because although there is vast literature available on therapeutic relationship and on diabetic patients but the therapeutic relationship with diabetic patient has not been explored much.

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In this review, five studies have been identified and annotated bibliography of these studies has been given. In the next phase, this review presents a discussion which summaries the information presented in the selected studies. The conclusion provides the sum of the whole discussion.

Selected Studies

After searching thoroughly the keywords, i.e. therapeutic relationship, diabetic patient, health workers, communication, etc. on databases such as CINAHL, PubMed, Medline, Ebscohost etc. and by applying the inclusion criteria such as published studies, studies in English, therapeutic relationship with diabetic patient, published within 2010 to 2016; the researcher found the following five studies.

Author(s)	Population	Intervention	Results
Macdonald et al (2013).	Video recording of Thirty-five primary health care consultations which involves 18 diabetic patients and 10 nurses	Interviews of Nurses and Patients	The Communication Process has been hindered by protocols and checklists
Stoddart (2012)	Grounded methodology used and the data was collected from the four health centres and analysed through constant comparative analysis process.	Observations, informal interviews and semi-structured interviews	Both patients and nurses keep changing and reconstructing their roles to perform appropriately; knowledge of previous and current experiences have a key role in this process
Damasceno et al (2012)	One nurse, two nutritionists and one physician – responsible for diabetic patients care and 24 patients with DM	Direct Observation	Different health workers use different communication techniques while communicating and providing therapeutic relationship with diabetic patients
Rørtveit et al (2015)	A Systematic Review	Based on Secondary Data	Patients/Nurse relationship's trust is based on nurses' knowledge and their engagement in communication

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Tofan et al (2013)	Studies on the relevant topic	Based on secondary data	Patient / Physicians therapeutic relationship is based on trust and ethical oversight and on its governance mechanisms
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Annotated Bibliography

Macdonald, L., Stubbe, M., Tester, R., Vernall, S., Dowell, T., Dew, K., Kenealy, T., Sheridan,

N., Docherty, B., Gray, L. and Raphae, D., 2013. Nurse-patient communication in primary care diabetes management: an exploratory study. *BMC Nursing*, 12, 20

It is an exploratory study which was published in a peer reviewed journal, BMC Nursing.

This shows that the study is authentic and credible. The scope and purpose of this study is to show the therapeutic relationship and communication of diabetes patients and nurses. For this purpose, the researchers have analysed 35 consultations of diabetic patients which involve 18 patients and 10 nurses. These consultations are video recorded and then analysed. After six months study period, the patients and nurses are separately interviewed to see how the therapeutic relationship and communication affect their experience of diabetes management.

In addition to analysis of the recorded consultations and interviews, the number of consultations for each patient and total time spent with nurses and other health professionals were quantified and compared. This research study finds that initially the communication between nurses and diabetic patients is mainly consists of different medical procedures, examinations, distribution of related documents etc. This communication is almost completely professional which is often hindered by the protocols and procedures. Due to this hindrance, diabetic patients usually think that they have not been attended properly and so the element of trust is lacking in their therapeutic relationship with nurses.

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The research study is very clear in its presentation. It provides proper literature review, methodology and results of the study. Based on this research, this study presents a concise and comprehensive conclusion. One limitation of this study is that the data obtained through video observation cannot be confirmed statistically. In addition to that this research study, although uses a demographically diverse sample but it did not mention from which hospital the sample has been taken.

This research study does not show any conflict of interest among the groups involved in the research.

Stoddart, K. M., 2012. Social meanings and understandings in patient-nurse interaction in the community practice setting: a grounded theory study. *BMC Nursing*, 11, 14.

This research study is also a qualitative study which was published in a peer reviewed journal which proves that this study is credible. The scope of this research study is to determine the social meaning of patient / nurse interaction and relationship. The care provided by the nurse requires empathic attitudes sustained by a feeling of understanding between two people, which allows them to interact through individual actions with a common goal. It must work with affection and warmth, this will favour humanistic attitudes, promote emotional and spiritual growth, allow a meaning for life, this feeling will transcend in time and provide the opportunity to incorporate into higher values. Patients appreciate professionals who combine their technical competence with kindness, human characteristic that identifies their relationship with the success of comprehensive treatment.

In this study, the data is collected from four community health centres through direct observation, informal as well as semi-structured interviews. This collected data is analysed by using grounded theory. This research study shows that the past experiences of patients play an

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important role in establishing a relationship between the nurses and patients. Patients were usually uncertain about the expertise and knowledge of the health worker and the knowledge and expertise of health workers play an important role in establishing therapeutic relationship between patients and nurses.

This research study concludes that nurses usually do not fully understand the importance of social meanings of patient / nurse interaction and relationship, but this is important for patients. This research study is also well-presented and provides proper methodology, analysis, results and conclusion. There is no limitation of the research mentioned in the study; however, the study says that there is no conflict of interest.

Damasceno, M., Zanetti, M., Carvalho, E., Teixeira, C., Araújo, M. and Alencar, A., 2012. Therapeutic communication between health workers and patients concerning diabetes mellitus care. *Rev. Latino-Am. Enfermagem*, 20, 4.

This study was also published in a peer reviewed journal. This paper scope is also to discuss the Therapeutic communication between health workers and diabetic patients.

Therapeutic communication between patients and health workers fosters confidence and helps the patient to express their needs, favours the negotiation and sensitisation to the expression of bad news, thus avoiding barriers. Communication is perceived by the nurse as an instrument to achieve the feeling of trust and bond in the nurse-patient relationship. The ability of nurses to build and sustain therapeutic relationships with patients is strongly influenced by the organization and conditions of general rooms.

This research study uses the method of cross sectional study in diabetes and hypertension medical centre in Brazil. The sample consists of both health workers and diabetic patients. The

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health workers include one nurse, one physician and two nutritionists while the sample size of diabetic patient is 24 participants.

This study determines therapeutic communication at three stages, i.e. expression, clarification and validation. The expression stage is organised under themes such as using silence therapeutically, reflective listening, showing interest, showing acknowledgement, asking questions, answers questions, give free hand to the patients to ask questions, using humour etc. The second phase, i.e. the clarification phase is the phase where the patients expressions have been clarified which include encouraging comparisons, describe different events in a sequence etc. the last phase is validation phase where both health workers and patients are agreed on a common meaning of what is discussed between them.

The methodology used for data collection is direct observations of the consultation between the diabetic patients and health workers. The observations were recorded on a form and afterwards the video recorded consultations and this form is used for data analysis. The non-verbal communication gestures are observed through filmed content and through direct observation. Each of the four health workers was observed four times and filmed two times and the total filmed content is 480 minutes long.

From the analysis of data, it is found that the therapeutic techniques at expression group was usually used by the nurses, physicians used it at clarification group while nutritionists used it at validation group. This research study concluded that different techniques of therapeutic communication have been used by the health workers. Nevertheless, the researchers also concluded that professionals feel difficulties in establishing full therapeutic communication as some important techniques of clarification and validation groups are not used.

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This study has a small sample size which affects the generalisation of the results. Another limitation is that the researcher already informed the health workers that their consultations will be recorded so there is a chance that they may not act as routine. This study does not mention any conflict of interest.

Rørtveit, K., Hansen, B.S., Leiknes, I., Joa, I., Testad, I. and Severinsson, E., 2015. Patients' Experiences of Trust in the Patient-Nurse Relationship—A Systematic Review of Qualitative Studies. *Open Journal of Nursing*, **5**, 195-209

It is a systematic review published in an authentic nursing journal and hence looks credible. The objective of this systematic review is to focus on the element of trust in Nurse / Patient therapeutic relationship. The importance of fostering empathy for care practice builds trust and establishing meaningful links, which contribute to the quality of care. Especially when it comes to patients in the terminal phase, it is important that nurses encourage the patient to verbalise anxiety, their concerns and doubts about their clinical situation, to provide a qualified and adequate service to the situation that the person lives, providing him with a dignified death when appropriate.

This research study uses a systematic review methodology to conduct the study and this systematic review uses 20 studies for review purpose. These 20 papers were analysed and discussed under four themes, i.e. Attitudes related to trust, experience of trust, personal qualities of a person who creates trust and relevance of trust.

This systematic review concludes that the basic ingredient of trust in the relationship between nurse and patient is nurses' knowledge and their level of commitment.

Tofan, G., Bodolica, V. and Spraggon, M., 2013. Governance mechanisms in the physician–patient relationship: a literature review and conceptual framework. *Health Expect*, **16**: 14–3

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This study is a literature which was published in a peer reviewed journal; hence it is authentic and credible. The scope of this literature review is to present an overview of the therapeutic relationship between patient and physicians.

The physician / patient therapeutic relationship is fundamental to be able to perform the interventions, to be able to work with the patient and to help him in his illness. The therapeutic relationship in clinical practice is fundamental and at the beginning there is an inequality, since the patient suffers from a problem from which he expects cure or at least relief.

This literature review on the basis of reviewing extensive literature depicted that the therapeutic relationship between patient and physician is either based on trust or distrust. This research study discusses trust based and distrusted therapeutic relationships and then present the governance mechanism of patient/ physicians therapeutic relationship.

Discussion

The nursing profession supports its practice in nurse-patient interpersonal relations and demands a preparation not only technical-scientific of an instrumental type, but also human, understood as the professional's attitude towards the subject that requires assistance for their development and well-being as a person. It is not enough to visualise the patient from a functional anatomical view, but personal, social and spiritual, that is, integral (Cibanal&Carballal, 2010; González Ortega, 2007).

The analysis of the studies, mentioned above, affirmed that communication is an interactive and reciprocal process by which the nurse and the patient benefit (Colliere, 2003) is a key element of the relationship with the patient, without it is impossible to manifest to the patient

the intention to help and the kind of care the health workers are going to offer. The essence of nursing is interpersonal relationships. Therefore, communication is a fundamental element in the professional preparation of nurses (Cibanal&Carballal, 2010).

In order to establish an effective therapeutic communication, the health workers not only have to use words and tone of voice but also use body language, which in particular in the area of health has great significance, since with the innovation that exists in the management of technology and procedures, nonverbal communication is a very effective tool to capture messages with which the person expresses feelings and needs, so that interpersonal relationships are properly achieved.

The face of another person can be the most important stimulus in the interaction because it is the main emitter of emotional information, it is used all the time in which one communicates and it manifests aspects that are not spoken. Smile is associated with emotions of happiness and fun. The erect head, facing the other person in a relaxed manner indicates receptivity for interpersonal communication, the movement of the head from top to bottom implies confirmation or assent. Forward-facing shoulders may indicate interest, attention to communication. Arms and hands unfolded, Relaxed and gesticulating hands may indicate openness to interpersonal involvement or accentuation of some of the points of the conversation. Comfortable and relaxed legs and feet show openness for personal exchange (López& Vargas, 2010; Cormier & Cormier, 2008).

The verbal communication of the patients during the affliction and the disease can be difficult, so the nurses must take into account the forms of nonverbal communication such as posture, facial expression, gaze and gestures, given that these are generally expressed

involuntarily. The nursing professional must keep in mind what expresses the patient's corporality in all its complexity, without it verbally manifesting it (Noreña Peña et al., 2010; Vidal Blan et al., 2009; Beltrán, 2006).

When nurses spend more time caring for critical patients and have more opportunity to increase communication, they perceive a greater sense of well-being and success. Patients report that nursing care meant encouragement, good treatment, love and attention that pleases when accompanied by samples of affection. The appropriate nurse-patient interaction significantly decreased the extreme anxiety associated with immobility, numbness, and prolonged assisted breathing. In the same vein, it was revealed that interpersonal contact aimed at reducing excessive sensory stimulation in a postsurgical area decreased blood pressure, sleep disorders and perceived stress. It is important to point out that the nurse-patient interaction led to a reduction in hospital stay, as well as a decrease in costs and an increase in patient satisfaction (Regina & Silva, 2005).

A trust based communication between nurse and patient takes time, includes information, communication, understanding and dignified treatment; however, for some professionals their work performance could mean performing procedures, regardless of what the patient feels or needs. It is pointed out that the nurse sometimes uses technical verbal language, establishes brief and unplanned physical contacts based on physical and technological care without considering the emotions (Müggenburg & Riveros-Rosas, 2012).

The research revealed that nurses have to develop skills for effective communication and improve the interpersonal relationship between the nurse and the patient. Among these abilities mentioned are the visual contact which is a very important ability for the personal impact, giving

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a look favours the effectiveness in the communication. Non-verbal communication gestures include standing up and expressing a relaxed posture accompanied by gentle gestures and expressions gives confidence. Smile by nurses encourage patient's trust on them. The effective use of language in a clear and appropriate way facilitates listening attention and maintains an active interest. The use of humour favours the bonds of trust between the nurse and the patient with which authentic attitudes are generated between both. The achievement of nurse-patient communication is carried out through the identification and adaptation to the specific needs of each person ((López & Vargas, 2010; Cormier & Cormier, 2008).

This therapeutic relationship is also an ethical relationship, where the values of each one must be known and considered of equal importance, is a therapeutic relationship that demands of the professional nurse a behaviour that can be labelled as practical moral behaviour. The nursing ethics poses the development of daily patient care, not the great dilemmas; such seemingly trivial matters as calling a patient by name, treating him or knocking on his door before entering the room, and it is not these rules of courtesy, but the minimum and necessary respect for the one who has come asking for the professional help, without thereby losing their identity or their right to privacy.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to discuss therapeutic relationship between health workers and diabetic patients, the importance they have for the practice of health workers' professional practice and the value that patients, wisely, have conferred to this interaction.

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To achieve the global understanding of the particular being before us, it is important to help the person from a holistic conception; this requires the establishment of a nurse-patient therapeutic relationship, in which, without a doubt, enrichment is going to be mutual. The good nursing professional will have to propose a thorough knowledge of the person with whom she will establish the relationship, having previously acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to develop an effective relationship of help.

The verbal communication is very important because it allows to clarify the ideas that the patient tries to transmit, nevertheless the translation of the language and nonverbal expression are just as important. That is, the professional would be able to translate what without saying anything, expresses the patient's corporality in all its complexity.

Research on this topic has been directed primarily to the areas of care and observation of patients with Diabetes. It is noted that the development of technology has meant progress in obtaining and maintaining patient health, but it has also become a barrier in the process of interpersonal relationships. Aspects that nurses should consider in their daily work are to promote the best working conditions in favour of patients and nurses.

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