

ICN 2017 - Concurrent session / Poster

Topic: History

Submission identifier: ICN17-EN-ABS-6154

Conceptualising care: A historical exploration of manuscripts on nursing from the 1500s to 1850s

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Abstract Content:

Background:

Modern nursing has long been associated with the publication of Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing* in 1859. However, the discovery of a 1617 Spanish treatise *Instruccions de Enfermeros (Instructions for Nurses)*, highlights manuscripts were written regarding the profession *by nurses for nurses* at least two centuries prior to Nightingale.

Instruccions de Enfermeros described the professional standards and foundational cares performed by the nurse in 17th Century Spain. Incorporated into each descriptor of care was a rationale that was supported by (then contemporary) clinical reasoning. Hence, a structure which is similar to today's fundamentals of nursing texts is evident. The inclusion of such elements in *Instruccions de Enfermeros* suggests core aspects of today's professional identity and clinical practice evolved through the intergenerational sharing of knowledge across cultures. However, as a profession we know little about the existence of such manuscripts prior to *Notes on Nursing*.

Aim:

To explore what treatises were produced *by nurses for nurses* in Europe, Northern America and Australia from the century preceding *Instruccions de Enfermeros* until the 1850s.

Methods:

A scoping review was undertaken to identify documents regarding the practice and role of the nurse from 1500s to 1850s. The study was limited to documents originating in Europe, North America and Australia. A thematic analysis of the structure and main themes of each document was then undertaken.

Results:

The findings of this study will be presented, providing new insights on what our forbearers wrote regarding nursing identity and practice between the 16th and 19th Centuries.

Submission for: Poster presentation

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Presenting Author Bio 1: Tanya Langtree commenced as a Senior Lecturer and Site Coordinator for Nursing, Midwifery and Nutrition at MICRRH in March 2016. Prior to this, she has held various academic positions at the Townsville campus of James Cook University. Tanya is currently a PhD candidate whose study is exploring the influence of a 16th Century Spanish nursing manual on professional knowledge and identity.

Disclosure of Interest: None Declared

Keywords: History of Nursing, professional identity, Sharing of knowledge