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Chun Tie, Ylona (2023) *JCN Editor's Choice [Involving Families in the Care of Indigenous Infants: A Philosophical Exploration of Indigenous Ways of Knowing to Inform Nursing Research and Practice in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)]*. Journal of Clinical Nursing, January, 2023 .

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'Involving Families in the Care of Indigenous Infants: A Philosophical Exploration of Indigenous Ways of Knowing to Inform Nursing Research and Practice in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)'

The use of indigenous philosophies offers a unique perspective on health and well-being that can inform nursing research and clinical practice. This critical discussion highlights how Indigenous philosophies and ways of knowing can inform nursing care to address the gap in the extant literature on how indigenous families are supported in neonatal intensive care environments.

The link between the structural determinants of health for indigenous people and inequitable health outcomes is well known (Wrathall et al., 2020). The impact of historical trauma and intergenerational consequences of colonialism on indigenous families and community is recognised globally (O'Neill et al., 2018). Incorporation of Indigenous philosophies and methods into nursing research can address the role historical and ongoing intergenerational trauma effects have on the health outcomes of Indigenous peoples. This review provides an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of Indigenous philosophical paradigms and indigenous methodologies and then compares them to the dominant western research paradigms.

While Existing evidence on the structural determinants of health for indigenous families acknowledges poor health outcomes for many indigenous peoples, the authors stress how critical it is to note the significant strengths indigenous communities possess. Understanding indigenous philosophy and ways of knowing can inform the way care is provided to indigenous infants and their families in neonatal intensive care settings to improve health outcomes and social conditions.

What is less known is the effect on birth outcomes and long-term health of indigenous infants admitted into a neonatal intensive care unit. The authors place the discussion of indigenous philosophies within the context of the NICU. Indigenous paradigms offer guiding principles that can inform nursing research and improve the clinical nursing care of infants and families in the NICU. Recognition of Indigenous perspectives in relation to storytelling, research, and its effects on clinical practice is key (Geia et al., 2013). Aboriginal storytelling is one exemplar of a method that provide greater understanding between nurses and families. Incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing into the care of infants and families in the NICU can help to improve outcomes and promote cultural sensitivity and understanding.

Engaging the voices of indigenous families to identify their unique needs in the NICU setting is vital. The emphasis on a strength-based perspective that is characteristic of indigenous philosophies builds therapeutic relationships between nurses and indigenous families, increases family participation in shared care and understanding of indigenous perspectives, and improves outcomes for infants. This is a welcome shift away from the historical deficit focused research *on* indigenous peoples, and a move that emphasises collaborations *with*, and where nurses are instrumental in advocating for change.

The authors' argue nurses who critically examine the practices and policies that contribute to marginalizing conditions and inequities for Indigenous peoples are urged to consider an indigenous philosophical framework to guide practice. This approach values and respects Indigenous peoples' knowledge, perspectives, and experiences, recognises their strengths and resilience, and promotes a holistic understanding of health and well-being that is grounded in Indigenous worldviews. Nurses are well positioned to use indigenous frameworks to inform strategies that have a positive effect on the health of Indigenous infants and their families in the neonatal intensive care setting.

Critically, the authors illustrate the significance of a strength-based approach incorporating knowledge from both Indigenous and western learning systems. A strengths-based approach values and respects Indigenous peoples' knowledge, perspectives, and experiences, and recognises their strengths and resilience. While not new (Geia, 2012), they propose such an approach can enhance the care of the indigenous infant and family in the neonatal care unit.

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