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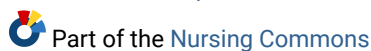
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Narratives of experience: Senior registered nurses working with new graduate nurses in the intensive care unit

Susan Whittam

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Publication Details

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**Narratives of Experience: Senior Registered Nurses
working with New Graduate Nurses
in the Intensive Care Unit**

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RN, Grad. Cert. Clinical Nursing (Critical Care), MEd (Adult Ed)

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement of the Degree of
Master of Philosophy (Research)



School of Nursing

Sydney Campus

December, 2018

Declaration

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made.

The thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007, updated 2018). The proposed research study received cross-institutional approval from the relevant Ethics/Safety Committee, Approval Number LNR/16/SVH/170 and from the University of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00418), Approval Number 0172111S.

Signed:

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Acknowledgements

The completion of this inquiry would not have been possible without the generous support and encouragement of many people. To all those who supported me, both in my professional and personal life, I cannot thank you enough. I would like to extend a special thank you to the following people.

I would like to acknowledge the guidance and support of my supervisors, Associate Professor Joanna Patching and Dr Nerilee Torning. Their humour, academic insight and commitment bolstered me during this research journey. Nerilee, thank you for being a supervisor and friend. I would also like to thank Associate Professor Tracey Moroney, who was the first to hear my research idea and offered to be my supervisor. Jo, I'm grateful that when my supervisory team changed you 'took me on' and encouraged me when I was full of doubt.

I am especially appreciative to the participants in this inquiry. They permitted and trusted me to tell their story of experience, and without them, this inquiry would not be possible.

To my family and friends, thank you for understanding how difficult studying has been at times. I know I have been neglectful of our relationships, placing more emphasis on writing than enjoying your company.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my partner, who recognises the importance of education and has supported me throughout the long research process. Also, for cooking most meals and feeding the cat during the past six months. I'm lucky to have such enduring loving support. The thesis is also dedicated to my mother, who raised a self-sufficient daughter. I hope this makes you proud.

I acknowledge that I received Australian government funding under the Research Training Program scheme and further funding via Notre Dame University's Higher Degree Research program. This work would not have been possible without this support.

Finally, I acknowledge that the information in this thesis was edited by Elite Editing, and editorial intervention was restricted to Standards D and E of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*.

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List of Abbreviations

ACCESS	Assistance, coordination, contingency, education, supervision and support
BOS	Burnout syndrome
CNE	Clinical nurse educator
CNS	Clinical nurse specialist
ECMO	Extracorporeal membrane oxygenation
ED	Emergency department
ICU	Intensive care units
NA	Narrative accounts
NAS	Nursing activities score
NASA-TLX	NASA task load index
NE	Nurse educator
NGN	New graduate nurses
NI	Narrative inquiry
NIMBY	Not in my back yard
NUM	Nurse unit manager
RN	Registered nurses
SRN	Senior registered nurse
SRQR	Standards for reporting qualitative research
TISS	Therapeutic intervention scoring system

TL	Team leader
TPP	Transition to professional practice
VAD	Ventricular assist devices

Abstract

The experiences and perceptions of New Graduate Nurses as they transition into professional practice and into intensive care units abounds in the literature. However, there is a dearth of literature exploring the experiences of Senior Registered Nurses who work with New Graduate Nurses in intensive care units.

The aim of this inquiry was to contribute to nursing knowledge by examining Senior Registered Nurses' stories of experience around the complexity of enabling development of New Graduate Nurses whilst working in clinical or team leading roles in the intensive care unit. Thus, allowing the Senior Registered Nurses' voice to be heard in the literature.

Narrative inquiry methodology, underpinned by Dewey's theory of experience, was used to examine the experiences of five Senior Registered Nurses in one Level 6 intensive care unit. This was achieved by engaging Senior Registered Nurses in individual conversations then co-composing the final individual narrative accounts with participants, whilst remaining immersed in the three-dimensional space of *temporality*, *sociality* and *place*. Thematic analysis methods were used to actively identify two overarching threads that resonated across all five narrative accounts.

The first thread, 'Reverberations', contained five minor threads: 'We Carry Them', 'It's Dangerous', 'Patrolling Like Surf Lifesavers', 'Enjoyable Moments' and 'Survival Mode'. The second thread, 'Caring', contained three minor threads: 'I've Been There', 'They Must Ask Questions' and 'Not In My Backyard'.

Analysis identified Senior Registered Nurses' workload and level of patient surveillance increased when working with New Graduate Nurses in the intensive care unit, leading to perceptions of feeling stressed, pressured and overwhelmed. Yet an obligation prevailed to support and care for New Graduate Nurses, perceived by participant Senior Registered Nurses as not yet possessing the clinical skills to independently care for critically ill patients in the dangerous intensive care unit environment

There are significant implications for health care organisations to increase resources to alleviate Senior Registered Nurses' substantial workload and recognise their essential role

in supporting New Graduate Nurses while simultaneously sustaining quality intensive care unit patient care.