Vägen mot implementering av familjecentrerad omvårdnad

Susanna Pusa

Akademisk avhandling

som med vederbörligt tillstånd av Rektor vid Umeå universitet för avläggande av medicine doktorsexamen framläggs till offentligt försvar i Aulan, Vårdvetarhuset, fredagen den 31 maj, kl. 09:00. Avhandlingen kommer att försvaras på svenska.

Fakultetsopponent: Professor, Karin Josefsson, Sektionen för vårdvetenskap/Högskolan i Borås, Sverige.
Abstract

**Background** When a person experiences illness, it can affect the whole family; thus, all family members may need support. Moreover, a family’s experience with illness can negatively affect the members’ ability to accurately realize their strengths and resources, which can influence the family’s struggle to regain and sustain health. Traditionally, the practice of nursing focuses on supporting individual patients; however, over the last few decades, the importance of involving the whole family in the care has been increasingly emphasized. Having a family systems nursing approach – that is, viewing the family as a unit and as a system – has shown benefits for patients, families, and nurses. Furthermore, research has been requested on how family systems nursing (including family systems nursing conversations) can be learned and implemented in health care.

**Aim** The overall aim of this thesis is to evaluate perceptions and experiences of support from nurses to families in their homes, and to evaluate an implementation regarding nurse-led family systems nursing conversations.

**Methods** The thesis consists of three studies with a qualitative design and one study with a mixed-methods design. In the first study (I), data were collected through ten focus group interviews with 36 primary health care nurses and then analyzed with a phenomenological hermeneutic approach. The data of the second study (II) consisted of seven recorded family systems nursing conversations with seven families and seven closing letters addressed to the families, written by the participating nurses after the conversations. The conversations and the closing letters were analyzed by qualitative content analysis. In the third study (III), individual interviews with 21 nurses were analyzed by means of qualitative content analysis. Mixed-methods were used in the fourth study (IV), where quantitative data from the instrument Families’ Importance in Nursing Care – Nurses’ Attitudes (FINC-NA) were analyzed and integrated with the qualitative data from individual interviews with 14 nurses.

**Results** The findings in the thesis show that nurses strive to support families in their homes (I, IV) and that family systems nursing, in the form of family systems nursing conversations, can be a way for nurses to help families share their experiences within the family and with the nurse (II, IV). Support from nurses and from the family was seen as essential to coping with the current situation and the future (II). A web-based learning intervention in family systems nursing that taught supportive family systems nursing conversations was perceived by the participating nurses as generally functional and suitable (III). Furthermore, the educational program altered the nurses’ way of thinking, meeting with, and working with families, becoming more inclusive and supportive even when not performing the family systems nursing conversations (III, IV). The evaluation of the implementation of nurse-led family systems nursing conversations reveals that the implementation was in progress, even if it was not as fully implemented as intended. The acceptability and appropriateness were assessed as positive; however, some obstacles were seen related to feasibility, adoption, and fidelity (IV).

**Conclusion** Nurses strive to support families’ health, which can be done through family systems nursing conversations. A web-based learning intervention can be an appropriate step in the process of implementing these conversations in home health care. The findings of this thesis contribute to enhancing knowledge concerning how to support families in health care, how family systems nursing and family systems nursing conversations can be implemented in home health care, and what aspects influence successful implementation. This is useful when planning further implementation of family systems nursing in health care.

**Keywords**