

Advancing Nursing through Education: Connecticut's Journey

The Connecticut Research Alliance

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Revolutionizing Nursing Practice Through Education

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Presentation Objectives



- ∞ Discuss Connecticut's strengths and challenges relative to reaching the IOM goal of 80% BSN by 2020
- ∞ Utilize Research to describe and expand best practices that support nursing educational advancement

What's the Research Problem?



Background:

- ❧ The landmark study by Aiken, Clark, Cheung, Sloane and Silber (2003)
- ❧ The 2010 IOM Report, *The Future of Nursing: Focus on Education* acknowledges multiple educational pathways to the BSN (i.e. ADN, diploma)
- ❧ The need to increase the approximate 21% rate of advancement to the BSN among diploma & ADN nurses is essential (DHHS, 2010)
- ❧ Recent inquiry reveals disincentive for ADNs to return to school for the BSN (Altmann, 2012, Orsolini-Hain, 2012)

What's the Research Problem?



- ❧ Research reveals the need for improvement so that returning to school is more appealing to RNs
- ❧ Variables that may support nurses in their quest for educational advancement have been identified
- ❧ Academic/Practice Partnerships can increase the relevance of educational advancement
- ❧ The review of the literature reveals that educational advancement of the experienced ADN enhances the impact of BSN education on practice

80% BSN by 2020



Institute of Medicine (IOM) 2010 Goal: Increase the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80 percent by 2020

Connecticut's Strengths:

1. CT League for Nursing (CLN) Statewide Articulation Model for Nurse Educational Mobility

History:

- ❧ Impetus: CT Legislative Special Act 90-9 in response to the nursing shortage in 1988
- ❧ Implemented in 1992 as a result of collaboration among experts in higher education and nursing regulation facilitated by the CT League for Nursing
- ❧ Calls for educational mobility for RNs & LPNs without loss of credit
- ❧ Evaluated & revised in 2002 to include the escrow concept

80% BSN by 2020



CLN Statewide Articulation Model (con't.):

- ❧ Established a minimum number of credits to transfer to upper division nursing programs
 - ❧ Thirty General Education Credits
 - ❧ Thirty Nursing credits*
- ❧ Serves as a foundation for even stronger agreements among nursing programs
 - ❧ Many agreements go beyond the minimum credits
 - ❧ Nurses with Bachelors degrees in other disciplines are further ahead

**the 30 nursing credits are held in escrow until the student is able to demonstrate required competency, at which time credit will be awarded.*

80% BSN by 2020



Connecticut's Strengths: (con't.)

2. CT graduates appx 50% ADN and 50% BSN annually (appx 2% diploma grads)

- ❧ Public ADN programs have a Common Curriculum with standard RN to BSN agreements for all grads
- ❧ Transfer Articulation Pathways (TAP) legislated for CT Board of Regents (BOR) addressing all public higher educational institutions except UConn
- ❧ CLN Council of Deans and Directors Collaboration with CHA Patient Care Executives

80% BSN by 2020



Connecticut's Strengths: (con't.)

3. CT's status as a Robert Wood Johnson Nursing Action Coalition, since 2012

- ❧ The goals of the CT Nursing Collaborative Action Coalition (CNC-AC) focus on supporting nursing educational advancement
 - ❧ Recipient of an RWJ PIN Grant in 2013
 - ❧ Adopted the MA *Nurse of the Future Competencies* to assist movement toward competency based nursing curricula through a Gap Analysis (IOM 2010 recommendation.)
 - ❧ Supporting the collection of CT Nursing Workforce Data

80% BSN by 2020



Connecticut's Challenge :

1. Lack of Nursing Workforce Data

- ❧ Connecticut has not had a good system for the collection of data about the supply & demand for nursing
- ❧ Why is DATA so important?
 - ❧ SUPPLY: Need to know the Age, Gender, Ethnicity, licensure level, Level of Education (entry and highest), Employment Information of all nurses in order to address the need for nursing

80% BSN by 2020



- ❧ Why is DATA so important? (con't.)
 - ❧ DEMAND: What is the need for nursing across all settings?
 - ❧ EDUCATION: What is the current status of our nursing education system? Assesses the types of programs offered (ADN, Diploma, BSN, Graduate) and the Faculty supply within them (age, preparation to teach, etc.). Vital information as we plan to address supply and demand for nursing!

80% BSN by 2020



Connecticut's Challenge :

Lack of Nursing Workforce Data (con't.)

- ❧ An Annual Survey of Schools of Nursing has been consistently administered by the State Board of Examiners for Nursing (SBEN)
- ❧ Moving forward with DPH to collect data on nursing workforce supply through the annual licensure renewal process
- ❧ Unsure about direction for collection of data on the DEMAND for nursing

80% BSN by 2020



Connecticut's Challenge :

Lack of Nursing Workforce Data (con't.)

- ❧ All data collection is evolving in accordance with the evidence based *Minimum Data Sets*
- ❧ GOOD NEWS!! CLN has convened the *Connecticut Center for Nursing Workforce*
- ❧ Learn more about the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers at: <http://www.nursingworkforcecenters.org/Default.aspx>

80% BSN by 2020



In conclusion,

- ❧ Planning for 80% BSN by 2020 will take efforts from all areas of nursing and beyond
- ❧ Support for nurses to advance to the BSN is needed from all of us
- ❧ Evidence based educational approaches are necessary to ensure appropriate utilization of precious resources
- ❧ Educational Advancement of all Nurses has the potential to enhance the health of all

Beginning a Research Trajectory in Nursing Education



- ❧ A fit for my area of interest as an educator and leader in associate degree nursing education
- ❧ Interest in supporting seamless educational pathways for ADN graduates to achieve 80% by 2020
- ❧ Commitment to help meet the 2012 -2015 *National League for Nursing (NLN) Research Priorities in Nursing Education to Lead Reform in Nursing Education* (NLN, 2012)
- ❧ Doctoral Study paves the way through learning the skills of research

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory



- ❧ Remaining focused on an area and applying course work/projects to it, builds a repertoire of material
- ❧ Combination of Qualitative and Quantitative Research learning and experiences

❧ **Qualitative PILOT study:**

The Experience of Registered Nurses Working in Acute Care After Earning a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing

- ❧ Descriptive Phenomenological Qualitative Research:
Elucidates the experience in question from the perspective of the individual of interest, without the interference of researcher bias or pre-conceived hypotheses (Colaizzi, 1978).

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Descriptive Phenomenology Pilot



- ☞ Descriptive Phenomenology (Colaizzi, 1978)
 - ☞ Examines people in the midst of their “life world”
 - ☞ Requires the selection of those that possess experience with the topic & are able to articulate that experience
 - ☞ Requires putting aside prior assumptions about possibilities and end results, known as “bracketing”
 - ☞ data collection is through open ended interviews guided by a carefully constructed statement devoid of any presuppositions about the phenomena

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Descriptive Phenomenology Pilot



☞ Qualitative PILOT study (con't.)

- ☞ Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and consent, a sample of three RNs (co-researchers) who entered nursing at the ADN level, practice in acute care and earned a baccalaureate in nursing within the past 5 years were asked to respond to the following prompt:

Please describe for me your experience as a registered nurse practicing in acute care since you have earned your baccalaureate degree in nursing. Share all your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions you can recall until you have no more to say about the experience. Specific examples of the points you are making will be helpful.

- ☞ The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analyzed in accordance with Colaizzi 's (1978) method of descriptive phenomenology.

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Descriptive Phenomenology Pilot



Qualitative Pilot Study Findings: Five Themes

- ❧ Appreciate the value of entry level ADN education & the need for seamless educational pathways
- ❧ Critical thinking begins with the ADN, grows with experience and is enhanced by the BSN
- ❧ Earning a BSN broadens perspective promoting best practices
- ❧ Educational Advancement as a powerful tool for nursing
- ❧ Obstacles to impact unit level change seem greater after the BSN

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Descriptive Phenomenology Pilot



Quantitative Pilot Study

*Promoting the Educational Advancement of Registered Nurses
Prepared at the Associate Degree Level*

- Research Question: What is the perspective of associate degree nursing students in their final semester of study related to their educational advancement to the baccalaureate degree?
- Descriptive survey design was approved by the applicable Institutional Review Boards (IRB)
- Students in one CT ADN program were approached and consented to participate by completing the online survey

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Descriptive Phenomenology Pilot



Quantitative Pilot Study: Major Findings

- Greater than 3/4ths of students indicated personal goals to continue their education and encouragement by ADN faculty and staff to do so
- Over 60% expect to feel pressure from their employer while 83% feel the same from their ADN program faculty
- 78% plan to begin RN to BSN studies within 1 year
- 70% indicated they would be more likely to enroll in an RN-BSN program than in a nurse practitioner program

Pilot Studies: Strengths & Limitations



- ❧ Done with the objective of learning to do research, great hands on experience
- ❧ Notwithstanding, both gleaned valuable information and perspective
- ❧ Inconclusive due to small sample sizes
- ❧ Both can be replicated on a larger scale
- ❧ Pave the way to future research

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



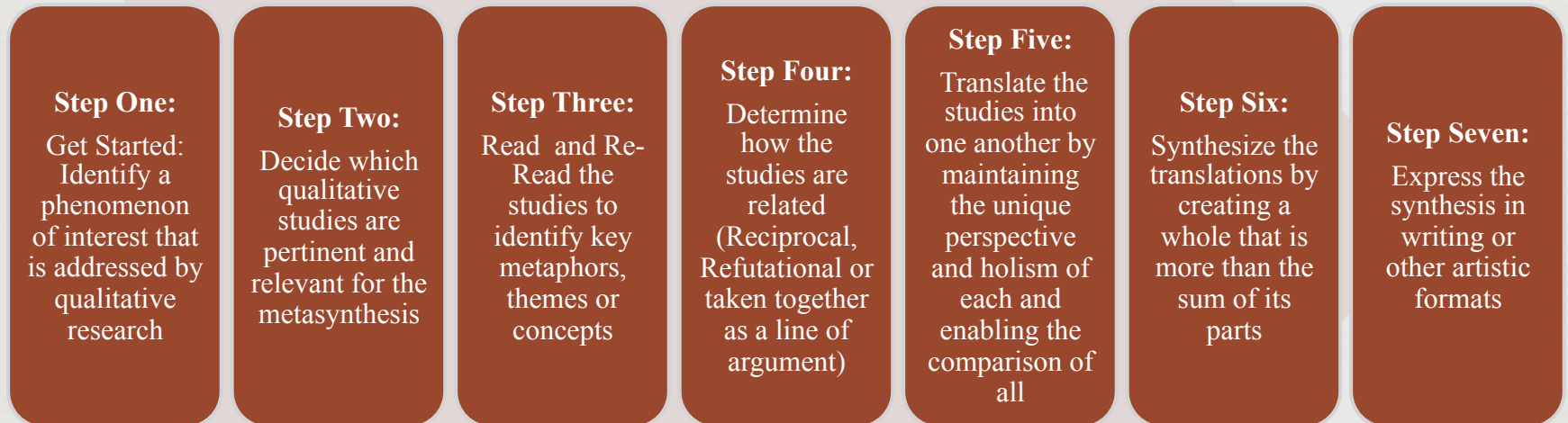
❧ Qualitative Metasynthesis

- ❧ An interpretive qualitative research method that seeks to synthesize individual qualitative studies on a particular topic, in this case

The Experiences of RN to BSN Students

- ❧ The resulting end product is a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts
- ❧ To elucidate these experiences in an effort to understand and perhaps improve them
- ❧ Ultimate Goal: to increase the proportion of ADN nurses that return to school to attain a BSN

Developing a Metasynthesis using the method of Noblit & Hare, 1988



Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?.
Nursing Education Perspectives.

Goal of a Metasynthesis: to collectively synthesize individual qualitative studies into a whole that represents more than the sum of its individual parts

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



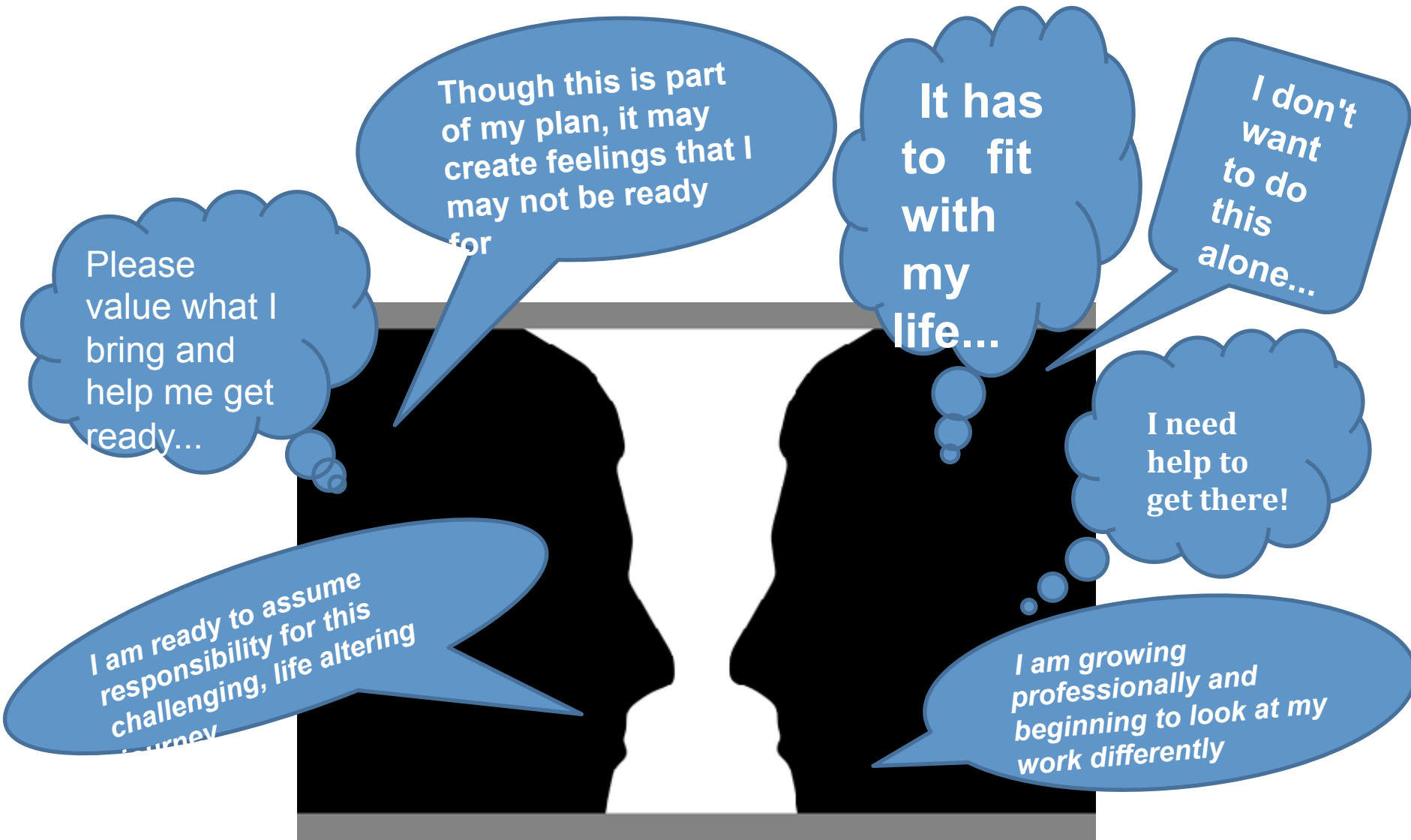
- ❧ Inclusion criteria for the metasynthesis were:
 - ❧ The focus of the study was educational advancement from RN to BSN
 - ❧ The study was undertaken from 2000 to present
 - ❧ The research design was qualitative or included a qualitative component
- ❧ Thirteen Studies were included in the sample, representing:
 - ❧ 324 RN to BSN students; ages 19-62 years
 - ❧ All US studies with one Canadian study
 - ❧ Incomplete gender and ethnicity information

Making Progress on the Research Trajectory: Metasynthesis



- ❧ Data Analysis: Applying the technique of *Reciprocal Translation* (Noblit and Hare, 1988)
 - ❧ The studies are read and re-read
 - ❧ Metaphors that portray the essence of each study are chosen by the researcher
 - ❧ The studies are translated into one another
 - ❧ The translations are synthesized
 - ❧ The Synthesis is expressed in writing or other artistic formats

RN to BSN Education: 7 Overarching Themes from the Student Experience



Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us?. *Nursing Education Perspectives*.

Concluding Remarks & Questions



- ❧ Continuing the research; planning to finish the PhD!
- ❧ Paving the way to more research ...
- ❧ Statewide & National efforts to reach 80% BSN by 2020 abound through partnerships among academe and practice!
- ❧ More research and exploration will assist our journey in meeting the goal!
- ❧ Thank you for your attention...
- ❧ Questions??

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- ❧ Noblit, G.W. & Hare, R.D. (1988). *Meta-ethnography: Synthesizing Qualitative Studies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- ❧ Perfetto, L. (in Press). Facilitating Educational Advancement of RNs to the Baccalaureate: What are they telling us? *Nursing Education Perspectives*.
- ❧ References for specific studies used in the metasynthesis are available upon request

Thank you!



For Further Information
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