

Otago Polytechnic Ethics/Research and Development Application Form

Section 1

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Title of Project An evaluative study examining the influences and impact of engaging in an Advanced Child and Family postgraduate certificate

Overview / Abstract of Project:

The aim of this research project is to uncover the influences and impact of successfully completing the Advanced Child and Family postgraduate certificate. Postgraduate education is considered essential for registered nurses wishing to advance their practice. Whilst such education is burgeoning, there is a dearth of research regarding the experiences of those undertaking such programmes.

Anecdotally we understand this requires a huge commitment and many participants confront considerable barriers. Most participants are women with full time jobs and family commitments, who experience amongst other things economic and time constraints, as well as personal issues such as low self esteem and confidence related to their academic capabilities. Programmes participants undertake need to provide effective, strategic and inclusive teaching and learning. This requires a clear understanding of not only the perceived barriers, but also the relevancy of the educational content and process to the participants' goal of advancing their nursing practice.

This programme has been evaluated on a yearly basis, but an in-depth critical evaluation has not taken place. Used to measure the effectiveness of a specific programme, evaluation research can not only provide an accurate assessment of a programme, but it can also measure the effectiveness of differing dimensions within it (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). Evaluation research tends to use mixed methodology (Beanland, Schneider, LoBiondo-Wood, & Haber, 2000). This study will use a quantitative approach with descriptive analysis and a qualitative approach using thematic analysis to discover recognizable patterns and themes from life experiences (Phinney, 1998). This analytical process incorporates selecting patterns of words into meaningful units or themes, which can be combined to form a category system. Purposive sampling will be used with the sample frame being all participants who have graduated from the Child and Family programme. They will be sent an information sheet (Appendix A) and the survey (Appendix B). A further letter will be sent after the due return date thanking those who have returned the survey and encouraging other to complete and return the survey (Appendix C). Completion of the survey will imply informed consent. Ethical approval will be gained from CPIT and Otago Polytechnic ethics committees.

Is this study related to enrolment at another institution?

Yes

No

If yes, which _____

Is this application for - (*tick more than one box as applicable*)?

Ethical Approval

Funding

I have completed sections -

1

2

3

To be completed by your Head of School / Manager:

Please tick which apply:

- This research project is consistent with the Research Plan of this School/Department
- This research project is approved to be part of the staff member's workload/duties
- I am acting as a supervisor or referee for this research proposal
- I am aware of this research project but it is being conducted outside of the School/Department's Research Plan

Name of Head of School / Manager _____

School/Department _____

Signature _____

Section 2

Application for Ethics Approval

PROJECT TITLE: An evaluative study examining the influences and impact of engaging in an Advanced Child and Family postgraduate certificate.

1. DESCRIPTION

1.1. Justification

The advent of the undergraduate nursing degree in the mid 1990's accompanied by significant changes in health care delivery over the last decade have forced many registered nurses to consider undertaking postgraduate education (Pelletier, Donoghue, & Duffield, 2003). In doing so many are adding education to an already busy schedule of full time employment and frequently family obligations. With the average age of registered nurses in New Zealand being 45 yrs, moving towards study invites considerable challenges, both personal and professional. Compounding these are financial issues, significant for many nurses both in New Zealand and the United Kingdom (Hogston, 1995).

In the late 1990's, in an effort to explore the barriers many registered nurses confront in reaching their professional potential, the Ministerial Taskforce review of nursing (Ministry of Health, 1998) identified financial constraints to postgraduate education as a key finding. In response the Clinical Training Agency chose to financially support nurses practising in key areas, such as Child and Family Health. These nurses, undertaking identified programmes, had fees and release time from work paid. While such support has enabled many nurses to undertake postgraduate education, other issues have remained.

Facilitating postgraduate education for experienced registered nurses with considerable clinical expertise, but often minimal postgraduate educational experience, demands innovative and creative teaching and learning strategies be adopted. Nurses who choose to enhance and extend their practice need to be able to look to nurse educators to support and inform new initiatives in clinical practice (Frost, 1999). This participant group has specific educational needs, which must be catered for to ensure the desired learning is achieved. Detailed and explicit understanding of the content and processes that have enhanced participants learning will enable the creation of effective teaching strategies to equip future students with the skills required to advance their nursing practice.

1.2. Aim / Objectives

The aim of this research project is to uncover the influences and impact of this educational programme. Postgraduate education is considered essential for registered nurses wishing to advance their practice.

Anecdotally we understand this requires a huge commitment and any participants confront considerable barriers. Programmes this group undertake need to provide effective, strategic and inclusive teaching and learning. This requires a clear understanding of not only the perceived barriers, but also the relevancy of the educational content and process to the participants' goal of advancing their nursing practice.

Research Question:

- 1) To explore which content areas and teaching and learning processes were most useful and helpful in the development of advancing nursing practice
- 2) To understand the personal barriers and/or difficulties the participants may have confronted in completing the programme

- 1.3. **Procedures for Recruiting Participants and Obtaining Informed Consent**
All participants who successfully completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing Practice (Advanced Child and Family Health) will be contacted by mail at their last known address and invited to complete the survey (Appendix B). Returning the completed survey will assume reading the Information Sheet and subsequently giving informed consent.
- 1.4. **Procedures in which Research Participants will be involved**
Participants will be required to complete a four page survey (Appendix B)
- 1.5. **Procedures for handling information and material produced in the course of the research including raw data and final research report(s)**
Information will be handled by the two researchers for this study with secretarial assistance being used to facilitate data entry particularly relevant to quantitative data such as Likert type scales. In addition assistance will be given in sending out reminder letters and a summary of key findings. Such an assistant will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- 1.6. **Procedures for sharing information with Research Participants**
All graduates will be sent a brief summary of findings at the end of the study.
- 1.7. **Arrangements for storage and security, return, disposal or destruction of data**
From the time the raw data is received in the freepost envelopes at care will be taken to ensure it is securely stored in a locked cabinet and a locked room at any time that it is not being actively worked with by the researchers. Care will be taken that data bases and research reports or articles are stored on pass-word protected computer. Material will be shared between Judy Yarwood (CPIT) and me but both emails systems are pass-word protected. All survey forms will be destroyed by Document Destruction processes after 5 years.

2. ETHICAL CONCERNS

- 2.1. **Access to Participants**
All participants who successfully completed the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing Practice (Advanced Child and Family Health) will be contacted by mail at their last known address and invited to complete the survey (Appendix B)
- 2.2. **Informed Consent**
All participants will receive an information sheet (Appendix A) explaining the focus of the research and the intended use for the material. Return of a completed survey form will indicate consent to participate.

- 2.3. **Anonymity and Confidentiality**
Participants will be asked not to put their name on the survey and therefore it will not be possible to identify individuals in that way. However we are aware that other information e.g. place of work, could indicate a particular person and when reporting care will be taken to use broader generic occupations roles e.g. Public Health Nurse or Practice Nurse. Details are provided for participants in the Information Sheet (Appendix A).
- 2.4. **Potential Harm to Participants and how this will be managed**
No potential harm is anticipated but participants will have the opportunity to contact either me or Judy Yarwood if they wish to discuss the survey.
- 2.5. **Potential Harm to Researcher(s) and how this will be managed**
No potential harm is anticipated for the researchers.
- 2.6. **Potential Harm to the Polytechnic and how this will be managed**
No potential harm is anticipated for the Polytechnic
- 2.7. **Participant's Right to Decline to Take Part or Withdraw**
Participants have the right not to complete the survey. Once completed it is anticipated that they are part of the research cohort. Lack of identifying data on the survey will mean withdrawal after receipt of a survey will not be possible.
- 2.8. **Uses the Information will be put to**
The information will be used to:
- Inform teaching and learning processes
 - Enable increased appreciation of ways in which such programmes can enable positive change to occur for participants
 - Enhance planning of programmes by identifying types of information that have been most helpful to participants.
 - Presentation of Conference Papers (both researchers plan to present at the Nurse Educators Conference in Australia in November)
 - Journal Articles being prepared for appropriate journals such as Nurse Educator and Nurse Education Today, and it is anticipated that it would also be appropriate to prepare material for the New Zealand Nursing Journal.
- 2.9. **Conflict of Interest / Conflict of Roles**
The participants are not currently enrolled in courses taught of either researcher and have successfully completed the postgraduate certificate being researched.
- 2.10. **Other Ethical Concerns, eg sources of funding**
Funding is being requested through Christchurch Polytechnic Foundation to cover essentials such as copying, post, data entry of quantitative material etc.

3. LEGAL CONCERNS

- 3.1. **Legislation**
None specifically relevant.

4. CULTURAL CONCERNS

No specific concerns although Maori and Pacific Island graduates will be included in the sample. Participants may choose to comment on the cultural content of the programme but they will not be required to do so. Such results will undergo thematic analysis

5. OTHER ETHICAL BODIES RELEVANT TO THIS RESEARCH

5.1. Ethics Committees

Ethics approval will also be sought from CPIT Ethics Committee (Judy Yarwood is an employee of CPIT)

5.2. Professional Codes

New Zealand Nursing Organisation and College of Nurses Aotearoa

6. OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES

Expected timeline

End of July – Ethics committee for approval

13th August – Information letter and questionnaire sent to participants

27th August – Questionnaires returned – follow up letters

10th Sept – All questionnaires returned

September – Quantitative and Qualitative data analysis

Sept/October – writing papers for conference presentation and publication

Early Nov – Critique and overview of papers

End Nov – Australian Conference presentation

References

- Beanland, C., Schneider, Z., LoBiondo-Wood, G., & Haber, J. (2000). *Nursing research: Methods, critical appraisal and utilisation*. Australia: Mosby.
- Davidson, C., & Tolich, M. (Eds.). (2003). *Social science research in New Zealand: many paths to understanding*. (2nd ed.). Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand Ltd.
- Frost, S. (1999). Perspectives on advanced practice: an educationalist's view. In Rolfe, G., & Fulbrook, P. (Eds.), *Advanced Nursing Practice*. (pp.33-42) Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Hogston, R. (1995). Nurses' perceptions of the impact of continuing professional education on the quality of nursing care. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 22(3), 586-593.
- Ministry of Health. (1998). The Ministerial taskforce on Nursing: releasing the potential of nursing. Wellington: author.
- Pelletier, D., Donoghue, J., & Duffield, C. (2003). Australian nurses' perception of the impact of their postgraduate studies on their patient care activities. *Nurse Education Today*, 23(6), 434-442.
- Phinney, A. (1998). Living with dementia: From the patient's perspective. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*, June, 8-15.



Information Sheet

An evaluative study examining the influences and impact of engaging in a Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing Practice (Advanced Child and Family Health)

General Introduction

Greetings to you all! It is lovely to have the opportunity to be back in contact with you again. For some of you it will be a while since you have undertaken the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing (Advanced Child and Family Health), but for others it will have been in more recent years. I am undertaking this research with Judy Yarwood a Senior Lecturer from the School of Nursing at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology. For those of you who have engaged with this programme in the last three years, Judy will be known to you. However those from earlier years will not have had an opportunity to meet her.

The aim of this research project is to discover the influences and impact of the Child and Family postgraduate certificate offered through Otago Polytechnic. In particular we are interested to explore your perceptions of successfully completing this programme: personally, professionally and in relation to your practice. We appreciate that such a course requires a huge commitment and some of you may have confronted considerable barriers. Therefore we are interested to know what those barriers were and how you addressed them. We are also aware that learning is a complex reality so we would like you to identify for us the factors that helped your learning.

Enclosed you will find a 4 page survey which will take about 20 minutes to complete. We are gathering this data to assist us in planning and engaging with teaching and learning to enable us to maximise learning gains for future participants. We are sending this survey to the last known address of all participants who successfully completed the programme and if you are aware of more up to date addresses for some of your colleagues we would appreciate it if you passed it on to us. Should you agree to take part please complete the enclosed survey and return to us by (*14 days after sending*) in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope. Completion and return of the survey will be taken as consent to participate. Once the questionnaire has been returned it cannot be withdrawn as an individual's data is unable to be retrieved. We are planning to present the results of this study at conferences and will publish related articles in appropriate journals such as New Zealand Nursing Journal and Nurse Education Today. A brief summary of findings will be posted to all graduates of the programme.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Otago Polytechnic and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology Ethics Committees. We ask that you do not put your name on the survey but we are aware that some data could make it easier for an individual to be identified e.g. where to you work. When we collate and report the data we will be using broad generic categories such as Public Health Nurses or Practice Nurses without identifying geographic location. The data collected will be retained in secure storage for a period of five years, after which it will be destroyed. You can decline to participate without any disadvantage to your academic progress at an time. If you choose to participate, you can refuse to answer any particular question.

Key information

- The enclosed survey will take about 20 minutes to complete
- Please return it to use in the FREEPOST envelope by (state date)
- Please do not put your name on the survey.
- It is not possible to withdraw after the survey is submitted as an individual's information cannot be retrieved.

If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Dr. Janice McDrury,
School of Nursing,
Otago Polytechnic.
Ph (03) 479 6135,
Email: janicem@tekotago.ac.nz

or:
Judy Yarwood,
School of Nursing,
Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
Ph (03) 940 8280
Email: yarwoodj@cpit.ac.nz

Appendix C

Project title: An evaluative study examining the influences and impact of engaging in an Advanced Child and Family postgraduate certificate

Greetings to you all!

Firstly we wish to thank all of you who have returned their survey to us. We really appreciate the time and effort you have taken and look forward to working with the data.

For those of you who have not yet completed and returned the survey we would encourage you to do so. Your ideas and experience is important to us. We would appreciate it if you could return this to us by (10 days from sending of this letter). If you have mislaid the survey or the Freepost Envelope please contact Judy or me and we will arrange to send you another.

Kind regards

Janice
Dr. Janice McDrury,
School of Nursing,
Otago Polytechnic.
Ph (03) 479 6135,
Email: janicem@tekotago.ac.nz

Judy
Judy Yarwood,
School of Nursing,
Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
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How has engaging in this content area impacted on your personal and professional development?

2) _____ (name the area)

How important has the content area been to you? **1** **2** **3** **4**
None **Minimal** **Moderate** **Substantial**

How has this been important for the development of your nursing practice?

How has engaging in this content area impacted on your personal and professional development?

E) Entering a programme such as this is often a significant step.

If you experienced personal barriers in relation to completing this certificate how significant were they?

1 **2** **3** **4**
None **Minimal** **Moderate** **Substantial**

If you experienced personal barriers please identify up to three and briefly state how these were addressed:

- -----

- -----

- -----

F) During this programme of study you received Clinical Training Agency (CTA) funding

Prioritize the three funding areas by numbering the following from 1 – 3
(with 1 being most helpful)

- Payment of fees
- Payment for release time from work for study
- Provision of additional funding to enable tutorials to be held

G) We are interested in ways to enhance learning.

Identify and briefly explain three factors you believe were most important in enabling you to learn.

1)

2)

3)

H) Overall, to what degree did the teaching and learning experiences and environment provided in the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Nursing Practice (Advanced Child and Family Health) enable your learning?

1	2	3	4
None	Minimal	Moderate	Substantial

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation

Janice McDrury
Judy Yarwood