

# New Horizon: Scholarship of Nursing Practice

Exploration of a Broadened  
Definition of Nursing Scholarship

Judy Honig, EdD, DNP

San Diego September 2010

# Emerging New Forms of Scholarship

- National movement of the DNP
  - Shift toward doctoral education for practice
  - DNP as the terminal degree for nursing practice
- New reality in nursing education and practice
  - Practice doctorate becomes the norm in service and in academia
  - Roles of APRNs are evolving
  - Practice models are growing

# Prevailing Environment for Nursing Scholarship

- Academia establishes the norm for scholarship
  - Developed and shared within the academic community
- Scholarship in the academy depends upon knowledge production
- Activities focus on traditional research methodology and outcomes that result from independent research
  - Clinical research is not a proxy for clinical scholarship

# Times in Transition: Opportunity to Redefine

- Changing context is a time to influence the direction
- Clinical scholars can contribute to knowledge in ways that fall outside of traditional definitions of nursing scholarship
- Nursing practice is fundamental to the discipline and to clinical scholarship
- Outcomes of clinical scholarship are derived from practice

# Challenge

- Powerful status quo in the nursing discipline
  - Educated and socialized in the dominant research-centered environment
- Activities remain focused on traditional research methodology and outcomes from independent research
- Broadened definition of nursing scholarship needs to be fostered from within the discipline
- Gain legitimacy in the community of scholars
  - Create and recognize new ways of knowledge
  - Garner consensus across the profession

# Critical Appraisal of Nursing Scholarship is not New

- Models of nursing scholarship have been examined
- Frameworks to define a broadened perspective have been posited

# AACN on Nursing Scholarship

- AACN (1999) based their definition on Boyer's model
  - Research-orientation with emphasis on the Scholarship of Discovery
- Scholarship in nursing can be defined as those activities that systematically advance the teaching, research, and practice of nursing through rigorous inquiry that
  - is significant to the profession
  - is creative
  - can be documented
  - can be replicated or elaborated
  - can be peer-reviewed through various methods

# Nursing Scholarship using Boyer's Framework

- One narrow interpretation of Boyer's model designates clinical scholarship as the scholarship of application
  - Evidence of clinical expertise
  - Application of standards
  - Participation in quality improvement projects
- Boyer's model has great potential to provide the framework for a richer and more inclusive definition of nursing scholarship
- Use of Boyer's conceptualization of overlapping, not mutually exclusive, with an emphasis **equally important areas**
  - Scholarship of discovery
    - Traditional research
  - Scholarship of integration
    - Interdisciplinary connections of research across disciplines
  - Scholarship of application
    - Using research in practice
  - Scholarship of teaching
    - Teaching to achieve optimal learning

# Sigma Theta Tau on *Clinical* Scholarship

- Examination of *clinical scholarship*
- Intellectual process that incorporates “inquiry and reflection” to critically examine practice
- STTI Clinical Scholarship Task Force describes clinical scholarship as including
  - identification of desired outcomes
  - use of systematic observation
  - scientifically-based methods to identify and solve clinical problems
  - the substantiation of practice and clinical decisions with reference to scientific principles, current research, consensus-based guidelines, quality improvement data and other forms of evidence
  - evaluation, documentation and dissemination of outcomes and improvements in practice through a variety of mechanisms including publication, presentations, consultation and leadership
  - use of clinical knowledge and expertise to anticipate trends, predict needs, create effective clinical products and services, and manage outcomes(Sigma Theta Tau International, 1999)

# Nurses on Clinical Scholarship

- Clinical scholarship begins with reflective observations of patients but differs from clinical research. It results in knowing based on informed, intelligent, and clinically grounded analysis (Diers, 1995)
- Clinical scholarship, defined as that knowledge derived from the analysis and synthesis of observations of clients and families, is a complex activity that has as its purpose the discovery, organization, analysis, synthesis and transmission of knowledge resulting from client-oriented nursing practice (Palmer, 1986)

# Nurses on Clinical Scholarship

- A clinical scholar depends upon a deep understanding and autonomous preserve within the context of delivering care....A clinical scholar is a doer, a practitioner—an observant, analytical expert searching for themes, comparing outcomes, alert to synergies, and grounded in reflection. (Mundinger, 2009)
- Knowledge development is based on the scholarship of discovery and relates to outcome research and the development of the evidence for new models of practice (Fiandt et al., 2003)

# Dreher (1999) on Clinical Scholarship

- Clinical scholarship is an intellectual process, grounded in curiosity by an individual with strong knowledge in the field.
- Observation is foundational
- Analysis of the observed data including interpretation and contextualization
- Synthesis of the analysis in a thoughtful and deliberative way
- Application and Dissemination

# Rigor of Clinical Scholarship

- Systematic way of knowing and problem solving
- Observe, analyze, interpret, apply and disseminate and be subject to peer review

# Dissemination is Paramount

- Scholarship requires the ability to communicate ideas effectively, cogently, coherently and concisely through the written word (Kitson, 2006)
- Transforming the discovery of new knowledge and integration into new practices is only scholarly when it is disseminated to others and judged by other scholars (Glassick, 1997)

# Themes about the Clinical Scholar

- Engages in thoughtful practice and reflection
- Is actively immersed in the context in which the observation and analysis are made
- Has sustained and enduring immersion in the context
- Uses keen observation and deep reflection that result in new understandings and new knowledge
- Has potential to improve patient outcomes and change the course of clinical practice

# Unique Characteristic of Clinical Scholarship

- A nurse clinician engages in clinical scholarship
- Begins with observation that comes from practice and builds on it
- Grounded in creativity, curiosity, reflection and application
- Collaborative within and without of the discipline
- Subject to peer review

# DNP Exemplifies the Clinical Scholar

- Chart the direction of clinical scholarship in academia and practice
- Clarify the definitions and descriptions of nursing scholarship to include these non traditional ways of knowledge and problem solving
- Explore innovative models of clinical scholarship and practice innovations
- Translate evidence to practice with reflection and critically appraisal
- Posit fresh and new linkages among ideas derived from reflection and keen observation
- Build new evidence from practice, in particular, using the power of information technology
- Assume lifelong learning

# New Professional Mandate

- Distinguish clinical scholarship from the traditional products of scholarships in nursing
- Establish clinical scholarship within the community of nursing scholars
  - Clinical practice is fundamental to the discipline of nursing
- Disseminate outcomes of clinical scholarship that are derived from nursing practice
- Practice as a clinical scholar

San Diego September 2010