Nurses’ Experiences of Caring for Abandoned Infants in Hospital

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Research Question

How do registered nurses working in the hospital context come to understand their experiences of caring for abandoned infants?

Objectives

To reveal what nurses experience when they provide care to abandoned infants in the hospital. Ethical Review: Conjoint Health Research Ethics approval received September 5, 2017. Ethics ID: REB17-1206.

Method

Grounded theory is a method for the discovery of a theory to explain specific situations or problems [1,2]. Data are being collected through interviews and observations with registered nurses employed at one of the 5 Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICUs) in Calgary. A poster, asking participants to self-identify, is displayed at each NICU in Calgary. A sample size between 12-20 participants is anticipated [1-4]. Preliminary Results: At this time 98 categories have been identified. The preliminary core categories will be presented. Conclusion: Abandoned infants residing in hospitals is an increasing, international, and poorly understood phenomenon[5-9]. Nurses can experience an emotional response as they witness the suffering of others and may, as a result, withdraw emotionally from patients as a means of self-protection [10,11]. Moreover, the expectation of nurses to be nurturing without sufficient resources, may contribute to poor performance, increased use of sick time, decreased productivity, substance abuse, and apathy [11-13]. Even before nurses were credentialed or institutions were hospitals, nurses cared for abandoned infants [14,15]. This history, woven together over time, might suggest why this phenomenon has been overlooked.
References


