

Summary of the PhD Dissertation

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Curriculum Vitae

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Description of the project

Practicing contextual models of interprofessional care: a grounded theory study

In recent decades, interprofessional education (IPE) with the main motivation to develop skills, competencies and attitudes to interprofessional collaboration (IPC), was established as an objective of many government policies that were inspired by what was specified by national and international organizations. Even if in Switzerland there have been experiences of IPE in some of the universities who deal with health professional's education, literature is poor with regard to procedures adopted to prepare students for IPC.

A constructivist grounded theory approach was adopted to define a theoretical explanation of the process observed in a University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Southern Switzerland where ten undergraduate students of the bachelors in nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, as well as the clinical tutors who followed them in the last stage of the bachelor's degree course were involved in the study. In phase one, data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews (22) with participants and university documentation consultation; in phase two, through focused interviews (3), participant observations (3) and consultation of participants' documentation. The analysis was conducted through a coding process: initial, focused and theoretical. Data was analyzed and coded using constant comparative analysis with the support of Nvivo 10 software. A substantive theory "Practicing contextual models of interprofessional care (IC)" was generated. It explains how the whole process is takes place, the interaction between tutor and

student and how they proceed together to create models of IC, linked to the context in which they find themselves, and to the patients/families who are part of it. The theory was described as a journey: seeing this process as a journey and as students and tutor as companions of this journey, helps to understand the intensity of the relationships, communication and exchanges that the two travelers experience through and build together. The relationship between a student and his/her tutor is the innovative aspect of this theory. This relationship, which develops between student and tutor and that consolidates and transforms itself, is structured differently from dyad to dyad because it is constantly supported by different types of communication (verbal and nonverbal) and by individualized way it is structured. Therefore, this student/tutor relationship is the standpoint around which the entire process develops and expresses itself.

The key concepts that emerged from this study were: how professional identity is built and the student's role within the team; the relationship develops and consolidates itself between student and tutor along the process; the relationship with patients and families as well as with other professionals. All of these concepts need to be integrated with one another in order to build effective models of IC in a specific context.

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