

should not be considered as detracting in any way from what Ross-Kerr has accomplished. No history can include everything, but in reading history it is as important to note what has been left out is what may emerge as salient for particular authors. Ross-Kerr obviously values

nursing and nurses, and has made an impressive contribution to nursing knowledge in tracing in Alberta, how recurrent themes in the history of nursing - struggles for legitimization, adequate remuneration and improved working condition, educational reform, responses to shortages - have played themselves out.

### **Learning Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: One Student's Experience**

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#### **Abstract**

Key Terms: Learning Psychiatric Nursing

Few Registered Nursing students intend to work in the mental health area. This descriptive research casts the story of a second year baccalaureate student, who is interested in this speciality and using a literature review of psychiatric clinical teaching. A constructivist conceptual framework and qualitative methodology using a case study approach

guides the investigation. Insights into experiences which one student found engaging and difficult as she developed skills in psychiatric nursing are revealed. Two themes in the student's story are identified and discussed to describe significant features of the psychiatric clinical learning experience.

#### **Introduction**

With the rapid and complex changes occurring in both health care and nursing education, student Registered Nurses interested in a career in mental health face unprecedented challenges in psychiatric clinical practice environments. Few psychiatric agencies today have escaped cutbacks, downsizing and restructuring of provision of services. In nursing education, revolutionary curricular changes have occurred in response to delivering programs of study through colleges and universities rather than hospital based schools. Compounding the hurdle of learning from a new curriculum in clinical areas undergoing turbulent organizational restructuring, students now see fewer Registered Nurses choosing to practice in the psychiatric speciality. Research related to clinical teaching in psychiatric mental health is limited and further study is essential in order to develop approaches which explain and promote the field. In this paper, we examine the process of learning psychiatric mental health nursing through the eyes of one student who hopes to work in the area.

#### **Literature Review**

