THE KNOWLEDGE THAT CRITICAL CARE NURSES HAVE OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE IN THEIR PRACTICE

by

DES FRANCO ABIATTOR MILLER

submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the subject

HEALTH STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROF MM MOLEKI

CO-SUPERVISOR: MS JE TJALLINKS

JUNE 2013
DECLARATION

I declare that THE KNOWLEDGE THAT CRITICAL CARE NURSES HAVE OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE IN THEIR PRACTICE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.

25 February 2013
Date

Des Franco Miller
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the knowledge that a cohort of 40 intensive care unit nurses had of evidence-based practice. It was assumed that they lacked the knowledge to locate, evaluate understand and apply research findings. Quantitative, non-experimental descriptive research was conducted to explore their knowledge and to formulate recommendations for promoting it. Data collection involved administering a structured questionnaire administered to the cohort in an intensive care unit. The findings revealed that, although they were familiar with the basic concept of evidence-based practice, they were reluctant and lacked the skills to adopt it in their practice. It is recommended that they be trained and empowered to develop research expertise from within their own ranks. Finally it is recommended that nursing management should play a more proactive role in identifying cost-effective strategies in overcoming barriers to finding, promoting and integrating evidence-based practice.

KEY CONCEPTS

Evidence-based practice; registered nurses; critical care nurses; barriers; intensive care unit.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge a large debt of gratitude to:

- My partner, Mr Emil Ogg, for his unconditional love, support, understanding and encouragement.

- My friend, Mr Albert Harold, for his persistence, continual support and encouragement and for his sterling editing of this work.

- A special thanks to my supervisor, Prof M Moleki, for her guidance, invaluable feedback on the work in progress and unwavering support without which this research would not have been completed.

- My co-supervisor, Ms JE Tjallinks, for her generous support and guidance.

- My former colleagues at Mercy Merced Medical Centre for their willingness to participate in this study.

- My former Nursing Services Director, Mr Mars Leffard, for granting me permission to conduct this study.
Dedication

I dedicate this work to my friend and partner Emil Ogg in whom I have found an ardent admirer and whose biggest compliment has been emulating me in my pursuit of education.

I also dedicate this to his unselfish love and affection and above all this patience in waiting for me.