

MISSED CARE: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE STUDENT NURSE

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Missed care is a recently described concept subject to an increasing amount of international nursing research. The impact of missed care is associated with poorer patient outcomes (mortality and morbidity) and poor patient satisfaction with the services provided by the hospital. Missed care has also been linked to decreased staff satisfaction and increased intention to leave. Overall disaffection amongst registered nurses is also reported. Professional socialisation refers to the acquisition of behaviours within cultural norms, and it has been suggested that students enter a period of professional socialisation during their programme. Whilst it has been proposed that students may absorb the characteristics of those around them, to date, no empirical studies have reported the impact of missed care on student nurses. The aim of this project was to explore the impact of missed care on the professional socialisation of student nurses. A qualitative study was undertaken in one higher education institute in UK with final year pre-registration nursing degree (Adult field) students. Focus group interviews, utilizing a topic guide, were used to collect data which was analysed using thematic analysis. Student nurses were aware that some planned care is missed and that the activities most frequently missed were discharge planning and patient teaching, surveillance: in particular skin inspections, ambulating patients, emotional support, hygiene, especially oral hygiene, and maintaining intake and output documentation. The participants explained that care missed was due to staffing shortages, competing demands, and poor team coordination. They had developed strategies to minimise the impact of missed care on patients and on themselves. The findings of this small scale study suggest that missed care is a characteristic of the professional socialisation of student nurses and that pragmatic acceptance is internalised. Although this study is set within nurse education in the UK it has relevance within a global context.

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