Male Nurses in Mental Health Care: An exploration of male Master of Nursing students during mental health clinical placements.
Research proposal for NURS8819

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Introduction

It is commonly known that nursing shortages is an international problem. Understanding the origin of this problem would be more beneficial to finding long-term solutions, rather than merely providing short-term solutions to nursing shortages (for example, hiring more nurses from overseas or other areas of nursing). Just boosting the numbers of people entering the nursing profession is not sufficient to understand how to develop the strategies for increasing and maintaining those numbers. In fact, nurses already working in the profession are unsatisfied with their career and leaving or planning to leave for greener pastures. The shortage is happening in many areas of nursing, with mental health/psychiatric nursing being one of the areas particularly affected.

But the journey into the nursing profession starts from educational nursing programs and nowadays there certainly isn’t any shortage of those. In Australia, for example, undergraduate nursing courses are offered by 16 universities. Unfortunately, mental health seems to be the least desirable career choice the undergraduate students make, even though upon the completion of the degree they are officially qualified to specialize in this area of nursing.

The level and adequacy of preparation of new graduates for work in mental health is a different issue altogether, especially with the current general negative attitudes towards people with mental illness, and the stigma surrounding mental health. It remains one of the major obstacles to promoting this area of nursing as one of the interesting and exciting career choices for new nursing graduates. Mental health nursing is not considered as ‘real nursing’ and unfortunately, undergraduate nursing education has been partially responsible for these kinds of perceptions.

So, is mental health nursing attractive to students in any way? Interestingly, psychiatric nursing has traditionally attracted more males, whereas general nursing has always been dominated by females. In fact, men have been able to contribute a lot to mental health by bringing some masculine traits which sometimes prove to be useful when dealing with psychotic patients. However, there are some barriers for men entering the area of mental health, and in fact, they exist in the nursing profession in general. Many male nurses are reconsidering their career options for various reasons, causing the retention rates in the profession to fall.

Even before marketing mental health nursing to men, we need to think about what nursing education can do to attract more male students into university studies in the first place and,
furthermore, steer their interests towards the area of psychiatric nursing.\textsuperscript{1, 11} To address the current shortages, nursing educators have to adopt strategies for drawing men’s’ attention to nursing programs.\textsuperscript{3}

The road to solutions might be more complex than initially thought. Numerous training programs for nurses might provide male students with a general Registered Nurse (RN) qualification, but does not necessarily address and resolve deeper issues within nursing education. Sustaining students’ interest in the nursing curriculum and preventing dropouts sometimes comes down to fighting for each individual student in order to preserve their initial enthusiastic and bright outlook on their future in the nursing profession. Many elements could contribute to students’ perceptions of their course of study. One of them is the clinical placement/practice component which, according to various studies, plays an integral part in the nature of the future choices students make regarding finding their place in nursing as a vocation.\textsuperscript{2, 8, 10, 12}

**Literature review**

The objective of this literature review is to reflect on students’ experiences in nursing education with the aid of previous studies conducted, and to identify the gaps in the research world related to male nursing students undertaking clinical placements in their university nursing course. The review of the diverse literature sources has helped to illuminate the factors that, in one way or another, affect nursing students during their preparation for a career in nursing. It also has provided a valuable insight into what type of nursing students and which areas of clinical practice need special attention. Careful examination of the literature available is intended to offer ideas for further investigations which will hopefully complement the existing information on men in nursing education and the nursing profession.

**Search Strategy**

For this purpose, a narrative literature review has been carried out. To meet the inclusion criteria all articles reviewed were in English, in full-text, and published between 2000 and 2010. The total number of articles retrieved was over 100, but for the purpose of this review we have focused on literature which relates specifically men in nursing. These articles were grouped into four major categories:

- Men in nursing
• Nursing students’ educational and clinical experiences (especially in mental health settings)
• Male nursing students in nursing programs
• Mature nursing students in nursing education

The databases searched to inform this review were cinahl plus, medline and web of science. Depending on the individual search techniques of a specific database the keywords used for searching were: males or men in nursing, students’ experiences, mental health nursing, clinical experiences, and mature age students.

To date, literature surrounding the experiences of nursing students in mental health placements has been mainly focused on how students in undergraduate nursing programs perceive their course of study and clinical practice. As has been mentioned above, the area of mental health nursing is experiencing particularly low levels of retention and high levels of attrition.8, 10, 11 The negative image of people with mental illness, and mental health nursing in general, has contributed to discouraging many new graduate nurses from choosing it as their future specialization.2, 8, 11 In fact, it has been known that the attitudes of mental health professionals themselves towards people with mental illness has been a big barrier in developing positive opinions in nursing students.10, 11 Gender studies in nursing provide a good foundation for exploring problematic territory like mental health, and indicate that this area could greatly benefit from attracting more men into this area of specialization.13, 15 Is it possible that entering mental health nursing could be almost a chance for male nurses to prove that their ‘masculinity’ is valuable to the profession, when traditionally, the essential traits associated with the nursing profession have been nurturing, caring, empathy and compassion, which are usually considered to be feminine. Gender-related issues also penetrated classrooms where the journey into the nursing profession really begins. In a female-dominated environment, male students are in constant negotiations of their rights, identity and place in these sometimes unwelcoming surroundings.13, 16 In the literature, a lot of attention has been given to nursing students’ attitudes towards mental health, influenced by the experiences in the practical part of their course. More importantly, the literature explores how these experiences could be enhanced to promote more positive feelings to mental health nursing, and rectify common misconceptions about mental illness.7, 8, 10, 11
During the process of the literature review various research studies have confirmed that the quality of students’ clinical experiences could be a critical potential strategy in promoting recruitment into mental health nursing and affect short-term and long-term retention.\textsuperscript{4, 6, 8} Unfortunately, a number of Australian studies\textsuperscript{1, 7, 10} also indicated that students have very poor mental health literacy and preparedness when they graduate with the nursing degree. This opens a way for discussion about the adequate amount of theoretical and clinical education that will positively impact nursing students’ outlook on mental health and its consumers. Apparently, it is evident that students who receive longer theoretical preparation in the mental health component of their course are more likely to settle well into the clinical learning environment and get more benefit from it.\textsuperscript{10, 11} According to the above studies\textsuperscript{10, 11}, other factors influencing these experiences are:

- The amount of time students spend with preceptors
- Preceptors’ skills and attitudes
- Length of clinical experience
- The setting of clinical placement

These elements were important for both male and female students; however males normally have additional challenges to deal with in nursing education. A lot of them feel isolated and excluded, and some sources report that in clinical settings they experience even stronger discrimination than in class.\textsuperscript{3, 14, 16} Moreover, many male students interviewed for research studies reported a lack of mentorship programs targeting male learners; failure to include a history of men in nursing, sex-biased language used by nurse educators and others issues in nursing education.\textsuperscript{5, 14, 17, 18}

Nursing educators often forget that male students have unique needs for learning, and may contribute to creating unsupportive and unwelcoming environment for male learners.\textsuperscript{14} It is apparent that factors affecting male students in nursing courses and clinical placements require more research. Connecting this idea with mental health education and clinical experience might provide an opportunity for valuable findings in this area of nursing. It is important to mention that the picture of male students’ experiences may be different when the population of male students is more mature, not just physiologically but also emotionally, socially, intellectually, and maybe even spiritually. In terms of preparedness for clinical placements in psychiatric facilities, there is
a notion that older students could succeed better than their younger counterparts simply because they might be more emotionally stable to work with psychologically challenged patients.²,¹⁹ Besides, it has been observed that mature students bring a wealth of caring experience to the nursing course that makes them highly sought-after by universities and the nursing workforce.¹⁹ They also have more self-confidence, which helps in developing relationships with patients. Overall, mature age students are better motivated to succeed in their new career and hence take their commitment to the course quite seriously.

However, the literature reflects that mature age students also face their own challenges in the form of additional pressures from work, family, etc. Achieving a work-study-life balance appears to be an extremely difficult task for a lot of mature learners, especially for those who haven’t undertaken a tertiary course for a while.¹⁹,²⁰ It could be especially demanding for men to maintain the role of a family provider and a university student. Male students have a higher tendency to abandon their educational pursuits due to financial problems.³,⁵ Thus, understanding the coping mechanisms male students apply during their training would be useful for motivating these learners to stay in their nursing programs and encouraging them to complete the degree.

Even though standard undergraduate nursing programs prepare students for beginning-level practice in mental health settings, presently there are a number of new postgraduate programs appearing in Australia that give people with a first degree a chance to enter the nursing profession and qualify as a registered nurse. As these higher degree options for becoming a registered nurse become attractive to an older class of the population, examining the experiences of mature male students could significantly complement the already existing body of the research about male learners in nursing education. The emphasis on the nature of these experiences during clinical placements in mental health settings is the key to understanding the factors impacting attrition and retention rates of new male graduates and male staff generally in psychiatric nursing.

Research motivation and significance
The primary motivating factor for undertaking the current study is to explore the phenomenon of male nursing students in mental health clinical placements in an attempt to gather new information that will supplement previous research in this area. The proposed research will assist in identifying the course-related problems experienced by male nursing students, and
therefore also in developing coping strategies to prepare students for future work in the area of mental health.

The primary aim and significance of the current study is to describe, examine, and interpret, within a phenomenological framework, the responses from interviews dealing with the lived experiences of subjects in a mental health placement. Additionally, students’ difficulties with postgraduate level courses may assist respective universities to assess the efficacy and effectiveness of the mental health placement. Findings obtained after careful examination of these experiences will hopefully assist future male nursing graduates in making informed decisions about mental health nursing as a career choice. The intention of the proposed study is to offer an insight into men’s perceptions of their clinical experiences in order to increase retention rates in mental health. As our research proposes to undertake studies involving Postgraduate/Masters level nursing students this could prompt further investigations into possible differences between male undergraduate students and more mature, postgraduate masters level students with life skills gained. Additionally, students’ difficulties with postgraduate level courses may assist respective universities to assess the efficacy and effectiveness of the mental health placement.

**Research Aim**

The aim of this study is to examine the experiences of a group of mature age male students studying for a Masters level nursing degree at three Australian universities. The intention of the proposed research is not to generalise the findings, but rather to examine the lived experiences of this particular group of students and understand what it means to be a mature age male student in a nursing program and what challenges arise from that. Additionally, this study is concerned with the perceptions developed by these students during their clinical practice placements, within a mental health setting.

The participants chosen for this study will be students who have not yet completed their nursing program, so it will only be possible to examine their intent to pursue a career in mental health nursing.
Methodology

Introduction
From the above literature review a comprehensive background against which the researcher can analyze and gain insight into male nurse experience has been set up. Methodology refers to principles, processes and procedures involved in doing research to seek knowledge, thus the researcher's interests, goals and assumptions influence what approach and procedures are used.21

Phenomenology: theoretical framework of the study
The main aim of phenomenology by Annells 1999 as cited by Standing22 is to understand how individuals make sense of their lived experiences, and comprehending these experiences.22 In the world of nursing, phenomenological research is relevant as it tries to determine how individuals perceive and understand this lived experience.22 Pioneered by the researchers Husserl and Heidegger the central concept to phenomenology was “being in the world”, a mind and body lived experience.21-23 Phenomenology focuses on individual life experience, how it is lived and what that experience means.21 Central to nursing are the interactions and lived experiences between patient, staff and families.24 Thus, the phenomenological method of psychological analysis requires that the technique used enable the researcher to view reality through the eyes of the research subject, and an acceptable theoretical framework to interpret and conduct nursing research 22, 24-26 In this study we use the variant of phenomenology known and interpretive phenomenology or hermeneutics.21

Basic design: Hermeneutical phenomenology
This study is methodologically grounded in hermeneutics inspired by hermeneutic philosopher Gadamer.27 Phenomenology described by Byrne 2001 as cited by Dowling28, looks at an individual's lived experience and collects shared meanings, whereas hermeneutics assumes that individuals experiences are through language, and this language facilitates for gaining understanding and the “art of interpretation”.28 Cornerstone to Gadamer hermeneutics are the positions on prejudgment, prejudices or pre awareness, universality of human understanding, language and linguistics, all which contribute to the process of interpretation.27-30 Gadamer viewed the process of interpretation as a cyclical process, known as the hermeneutic circle,
where interpretation is performed by looking at all the pieces that make up the whole experience, and the view of the whole which is made up of many different pieces.\textsuperscript{21}

As our study focuses on male nurses in a mental health placement, is it necessary to reflect on the ontological and epistemological concerns which impact on methodological approach adopted.\textsuperscript{29} Therefore the research is within an interpretive constructivist paradigm of inquiry, with hermeneutical phenomenology be categorized as post-modernist.\textsuperscript{31} Due to our study being involved in nursing care, which constitutes ontological and epistemological framework, hermeneutic phenomenology is best suited as the design selection.\textsuperscript{29, 32}

\textit{Sampling and selection of subjects}

In this hermeneutic research study, the participants consist of both the research team (research assistants, graduate students, analysis technician and administration staff) as well as the male nurse candidates to be interviewed. The basis for this is that with hermeneutic phenomenology, all actively involved persons in the research study all share a similar background of thought, and common understanding of the world which they live in and cohabit with each other.\textsuperscript{33} Participants were selected by certain set selection criteria: male, postgraduate masters level nursing students that had completed their mental health clinical practice placement. This would ensure that a homogenous sample was obtained, so as to allow revelation of what the lived experience meant to a particular group.\textsuperscript{34} They were to be of mature adult age, >25 years old. Thus participants being postgraduate, they would have completed a previous undergraduate degree of some form of tertiary education. Students were selected from masters nursing science courses at University of Western Australia, MNursSC (coursework) 91510, Curtin University –Western Australia (MNurs-Curtin) Course CRICOS Code: 055648E), and University of Melbourne –Victoria, Australia (MNSc ) – Course code: J09-MM. Mental health clinical placements will be at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital and Grayslands hospital in Western Australia, and the Royal Melbourne hospital in Victoria. The researcher proposes to begin the study with the aim of interviewing eight to ten participants with each interview lasting approximately two hours.
Data collection: interviews

All prospective participants will be sent letters providing details of the purpose of the study. On acceptance and before interviewing process, consent forms are to be completed confirming their agreement to participate in research study. The method of data collection to be utilized in this study is the in-depth, unstructured interviews. Unstructured (or rather loosely structured), face-to-face interviews enable the exposure to detailed, rich descriptions from participants, which is particularly crucial to this type of exploratory research. By not having a pre-determined interview schedule and commencing the interview with broad statements such as 'Can you tell me in as much detail as possible about your experience during your mental health clinical placement'? the researcher aims at getting participants to elaborate their responses, thus contributing to an atmosphere of conversation-like interaction with discovery-oriented and open-ended questions. Consequently, the focus is on what, how and in what context the experience occurred, rather than why it occurred. Direct contact gives the researcher access to subtle information, which is evident in eye-to-eye contact, and facial expressions as well as nonverbal expressions and body language.

Moreover a big advantage of a face-to-face interview is that it is not a completely foreign occurrence but rather it is very similar to a normal interaction between two people, which is an inherent part of social life. Furthermore, the researcher has to bear in mind that the of interviewing involves other considerations. Firstly, the researcher needs to make sure that she or he is well prepared for the interview beforehand by being well read on the topic - the literature study being one of the most fundamental steps in this process as it gives the researcher more insight into the area of review. In addition, the equipment has to be checked to ensure that it is functional (in the case of face-to-face interviews having to capture data on a Dictaphone). Moreover, it is essential that the researcher clears her or his mind of past bias and preconceptions, thereby making certain emotional state are correct; non-evaluative and non-judgmental, as this is the only manner in which the researcher can hope to establish a setting of trust which will warrant sharing of personal information.

External variables that could affect the quality of the face-to-face interview, such as the setting for interviewing needs to be addressed, for example: the quality of the sound would be affected if the interview was recorded in a cafeteria or if there were children present in the background; if being recorded in an office with windows leading to traffic noise, or if the sound of telephones
and equipment interfered with the recording. Secondly, the researcher needs to properly and thoroughly inform the participants, by disclosing with whom she or he is affiliated, as well as informing participants of the purposes of the interview and the reasons behind using certain equipment such as a Dictaphone, and by assuring the participants of anonymity and confidentiality. Lastly, it is imperative that appointments are honored, and that interviews are ended in a manner that is not disrespectful or leaves the participants feeling used. The researcher must endeavor both before and after the interview, to engage in conversation that is not relevant to the study in an attempt to demonstrate to the participants that they respect them as individuals and not merely as tools in this study. Through this, the researcher again highlights the fact that the participants are the foundation of the research and it is due to their time and participation, that this study can be conducted.

Data analysis
To analyze and understand the lived experience data gathered from interviews, the seven stage process of data analysis by Diekelmann et al (1989) was used. The phenomenological framework was selected as it offers a high level of rigour ensuring credibility, trustworthiness for exploring individuals lived experiences and enabled interpretation of shared lived experiences and themes.

Method of Diekelmann et al 1989 data analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>All audio taped transcripts read for level of overall understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Write interpretive summaries and meanings implicit and explicit. Gain a feel for the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Analyze transcripts in groups, identify themes, and develop a hermeneutic circle of themes and pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Get participants to review transcripts for further clarification or interpretation and validate their accounts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compare and contrast texts to see common meanings. Reading of texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Develop patterns and linked themes or inter relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Writing and re writing to form a final draft with content that reflects participants voice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data was collected and listening of audiotapes was performed. The audiotapes from interviews were transcribed in English. These transcriptions are word for word representation of the interview conversation that occurred. Key elements of this data analysis were reflection, clarification and comprehension.

In Stage 1, each transcribed text was individually examined in a process of gaining a full understanding to experience reported. Stage 2 and 3 featured assessing and looking for common meanings, identifying common themes, make summaries and slowly assemble themes and pieces with common links. During Stage 4, texts were compared, and re-clarified by returning back to the original transcript as a reference. All texts were re-read, and returned to participants to validate reported experiences. This then completed Stage 5. In Stage 6, patterns were re-developed and linked themes united, and with a final pattern emerging, this enabled the completion of Stage 7, interpretation of data.

Research rigor

A key element to the study is achieving the highest quality research, is in satisfying issues of trustworthiness and validity. Throughout the entire research study full detailed and concise audit journal will be kept. These will reflect methods and processes used during the study, and all decision making steps. This will lead to a high level of transparency, and methodological openness and auditability. Part of the study’s data analysis seven stage process, checking and re-checking of transcript and interpretation evidence performed by research team and participants. This continuous revisiting the evidence and verifying occurrences, the central element to hermeneutic phenomological framework used in the study, adds overall creditbility.

Ethical considerations

To ensure the protection of the welfare and rights of all participants, ethical approval for research participation shall be obtained from each institution involved on this research project - The University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, and The University of Melbourne, according to the current ethical guidelines (2007) which are outlined in the “National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans” issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
According to the ethical and legal requirements of consent, participants will be provided with an information letter outlining all possible aspects associated with participation in the research process, at an appropriate level of comprehension. The information letter will outline aspects such as the purpose, methods, demands, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and possible outcomes of the research.40

Participants’ choice to participate in the research project shall be voluntary, and all participants shall be required, after reading the information letter, to sign a consent form. The widespread involvement of students as participants in this research suggests that, as a group, they are considered to be competent to give informed consent, even if particular individuals may be vulnerable due to their age, health, or any other reason.41

Each interview transcript will be verified by the relevant participant before analysis of the data are completed. Participants will be informed about any potential to be identified in the results of the research being undertaken, even if identifiers (such as name, address, and other information) is removed from the collected data.42

It is acknowledged by the researchers that potential research subjects may be vulnerable due to the multiple roles which may be held by the researcher, such as a nurse or physician who is also undertaking the role of researcher for this project.41

Where there is the possibility of researchers having professional skills that may become relevant to their relationship with a participant, it is acknowledged by the researchers involved in this project that they have a duty to inform participants if and when they are acting in a non-research professional role.42

**Budget**

**Budget justification:**
Research Budget, see Table 1.

**Personnel**
A Research Assistant which will be leading the research team. Placement will be on a 12-month academic year appointment at $ 55,000. The research assistant is an expert in hermeneutic interpretive phenomenology.
Other Personnel
A part-time analysis technician currently on staff will devote 50 per cent of her time to this project ($12,000) for analysis and recording results. The technician is familiar in the data analysis framework of Diekelmann et al (1989).

Support is requested for two graduate students at $21,000 each. These students will work under supervision of the research assistants, and are also familiar with the field of hermeneutic interpretive phenomenology. Clerical support will also be budgeted for period of a 6 months part time ($21000.00), to assist in data management, report collation, and research assistant support.

Recruitment
A budget has been placed on recruitment of research staff via professional appointments on Seek at $250.00 and will also run advertising in local university editorials, which carries no cost.

Fringe Benefits
Fringe benefits are all inclusive of salaries to Research assistants and analysis technician. Graduate Students do not receive benefits in accord with standing University policy.

Equipment
Support is requested to purchase 2 x Dictaphones (Olympus VN 560M) and 2 x transcribing machines (Philips LFH-7277 PRO) exclusively on this project. The price quoted by the manufacturer for these items are $379.90 and $758.00 respectively.

Travel
One research assistant will be required to fly to Melbourne, Victoria to conduct interviews on graduate students at the University of Melbourne. Flights are costed at $649, and accommodation, transport and food allowance are budgeted at $1140.

Materials and Supplies
Total request of $ 487.50 for supplies which include pens, notepads, paper, stationary, micro cassettes and batteries.

Printing: Estimated at $ 500 for journal page charges and $ 500 for the production copies of a final report.
Postage is budgeted at $200.00

Facilities and Administrative Costs
For purposes of study, full service office space will be rented out for period of 12 months. This is the enables research staff to have access to reception service, photocopiers, boardroom facilities, fax machines, printers and 2 x desktop computers. Offices are ADSL enabled, and complete with commander phone systems. Budget cost is $24000.00 per annum. Only outgoings in full service office are telephone and power charges.

Limitations of the study
Despite the fact that efforts were made to ensure that this study methodological was sound inevitable shortcomings and limitations still exist, which need to be considered when evaluating the study.

The selection procedure and sample size
One of the common criticisms and thus, limitations, leveled at qualitative research is the selection procedure and the sample of participants willing to speak about their lived experiences. Due to the low number of male nurses in the industry, there are limitations to the sample population size of male nurses available within the masters level nursing degrees at selected universities. The masters level postgraduate nursing degrees within this study may be limiting, as they are relatively new university courses, with University of Melbourne offering the program only for the past four years.

Interviews
The personal characteristics of the researcher such as appearance, voice, clothing, posture, age, race and -gender can affect the research process and findings, because these attributes can affect the responses of the participants; interviews have social characteristics, thus any data collected via interviews can be biased by the interaction between the two. This refers to how information can be distorted due to the questions asked or the manner in which they are asked so the researcher needs to minimise this by refraining from asking questions in an emotional, opinionated or subjective manner. An additional aspect of interviews which could present a limitation, is that if an unstructured interview is to be monitored by steering conversation in the desired direction which could result in the relevance of the data for the study being compromised.
**Collection and Interpretation of findings**

The type of qualitative methodology employed namely hermeneutic study emphasizes the notion of pre understanding and with research team been included as part of the participant body. This could potentially lead to a bias in interpretive findings. Most all interpretations are not value free, a bias recognized as being inherent in qualitative research.

**Timeline**

The proposed length of time to complete this research project is approximately 12 months. It is proposed that the study will commence in the week beginning Monday 22\textsuperscript{nd} November 2010, and will conclude in the week ending Friday 25\textsuperscript{th} November 2011. (See table 2). The proposed time requirement for this study has been estimated with consideration to the major phases which usually occur as a flow of activities throughout the process of a qualitative research study.

The proposed time frame for this study will aim to cause minimal inconvenience to participants with regards to university examination periods and holiday periods, while allowing the time-efficient completion of required activities. The process of recruiting and selecting participants shall occur immediately following the university exam period and will be finalised before the Christmas/New Year period. The process of interviewing participants shall be concluded within the first half of the academic year.

**Design and Planning Phase** (approximately 4.5 months):

- 3 weeks (Mon 22\textsuperscript{nd} Nov - Fri 10\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2010): recruiting of subjects/study participants through advertising for study participants on notice boards around respective university campuses, and via email notices sent through university student accounts.

- 2 weeks (Mon 13\textsuperscript{th} Dec - Fri 24\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2010): contacting applicants and making final selection of 10 study participants. Selected participants shall be provided with information letters regarding all aspects of the research process and their involvement in it, and all selected participants shall be required to sign a consent form before interviewing commences.

- Break: Saturday 25\textsuperscript{th} December 2010 until Monday 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 2011.

- 3 months (Tues 4\textsuperscript{th} January - Fri 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2011): conducting interviews of participants at each participating university campus - the University of Western Australia, Curtin
University of Technology, and the University of Melbourne; all interviews are to be conducted by one investigator, so time allowances need to be made for flying interstate to conduct interviews at the University of Melbourne.

**Empirical/Analytic Phase** (approximately 6 months):

- 3 months (Mon 4\textsuperscript{th} April - Fri 8\textsuperscript{th} July 2011): transcribing the interviews.
- 3 months (Mon 11\textsuperscript{th} July - Fri 14\textsuperscript{th} October 2011): organising and analyzing the data collected from the interviews, and evaluating the data to determine if saturation has been achieved.

**Dissemination Phase** (approximately 1.5 months):

- 6 weeks (Mon 17\textsuperscript{th} October - Fri 25\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2011): proof-reading and editing the manuscript.
- Submitting the manuscript to a journal.
- Utilizing or making recommendations for utilizing the research findings in practice and future research.

### Table 2: Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and Planning</td>
<td>• 3 weeks (Mon 22\textsuperscript{nd} Nov - Fri 10\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 weeks (Mon 13\textsuperscript{th} Dec - Fri 24\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 3 months (Tues 4\textsuperscript{th} January - Fri 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2011)</td>
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<td>• 3 months (Mon 4\textsuperscript{th} April - Fri 8\textsuperscript{th} July 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 3 months (Mon 11\textsuperscript{th} July - Fri 14\textsuperscript{th} October 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination Phase</td>
<td>• 6 weeks (Mon 17\textsuperscript{th} October - Fri 25\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2011)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion
The information provided in this research proposal provides a preliminary insight into the complex and multidimensional phenomenon of the male nurses experiences in mental health clinical placements. In accordance with the phenomenological theoretical orientation of this proposed study\textsuperscript{28, 32}, the aim describe, thus attempts to understand the experience of mental health care as well as to ascertain the meaning that each individual attaches to his experience - a glimpse into their mental health reality.

Within the broader framework of research, the main goal of any research undertaken is the search for knowledge, in order to understand the meaning of the world around us; as such, the current study, will in future contribute to a progression of studies directed at finding a solution to attracting more male nurses into the area of mental health care.
### Table 1 - Research budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RESEARCH BUDGET</strong></th>
<th><strong>Expense Cost</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget period 1/1/2010 to 31/12/2010</strong> (Year 1 budget)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistant 1</td>
<td>$55,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Personnel</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis Technician @ 3 months</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Graduate Students @ 6 months</td>
<td>$42,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Support @ 6 months</td>
<td>$21,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>$3,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictaphone x 2 (189.95) Olympus VN 560M</td>
<td>$379.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription machine x 2 Philips LFH-7277 PRO</td>
<td>$758.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flights</td>
<td>Qantas Return $649.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Quality Inn @ $175.00 p/night x 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>Taxi @ $60.00 p/day x 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Allowance</td>
<td>$65.00 p/day x 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials and Supplies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pens</td>
<td>$8.99/10pk x 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notepads</td>
<td>$7.99 /5 pk x10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>$4.00 per ream x 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationary</td>
<td>Files/staples/clips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-cassettes for Dictaphone</td>
<td>$18.95/3 pk x 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batteries</td>
<td>$11/6pk x 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>300 pages x $1.00 page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>100 letters x $1.50 postage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilities and Administration Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Rent - Full Service</td>
<td>$2500 p/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Rent - Outgoings</td>
<td>$500 p/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget Total</strong></td>
<td>$173,714.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Male Nurses in Mental Health Care: An exploration of male postgraduate/masters level nursing students during mental health clinical placements, within Australian public hospitals

The aim of this study is the exploration of male postgraduate/masters level nursing students during mental health clinical placements.

I……………………………………………………………….. (the participant) have read the information provided to me and any questions I have about the study have been answered to my satisfaction. Further, I understand that:

• I will be participating in a 'one-off' interview

• The interview will be audio taped and transcribed. No identifying information will be recorded on transcripts

• The results of the interviews will be amalgamated with results of data routinely collected. Therefore no reports will refer to your responses individually.

• Data, information and audio tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet during the study and for a period of 3 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be destroyed

I agree to participate in this research on the understanding that all records will remain confidential and I will not be identified. My participation is also subject to me being able to withdraw from the research at any time without consequence.

Participant's Signature                                      Date:

Researcher's Signature                                    Date:

Researcher's Name :
Information letter

Male Nurses in Mental Health Care: An exploration of male Master of Nursing students during mental health clinical placements.

The aim of this research is to explore the experiences of male nursing students during clinical placements in mental health setting. In your role as a nursing student you will be involved in the process of collecting data for the purpose of this research. The evaluation is compiled by interviews with male nursing staff and analysis of data collected from these interviews.

You are invited to participate in the interview component of the study and the researchers at the University of Western Australia would very much like your input. If you do agree to be involved you will be asked to participate in a one-off interview with one of the researchers. The discussion in the interview will revolve around your impressions of the practice placement in general, the impact it had on you personally, how it compares to other clinical placements; and your ideas of how the clinical placement could be improved in future. As such the questions are general in nature. It is anticipated that the interview will take approximately 60 minutes of your time. Prior to the commencement of the interview, we will obtain your signed consent confirming your agreement to participate. The interview will be audio taped with your consent.

Please note, however, that your participation is voluntary and you are free to not participate, or if you agree to participate you are able to withdraw at any time without consequence or not answer any question with which you feel uncomfortable.

Please be assured that no participant in the evaluation will be identified and no names will be transcribed from the interview audio tape. Information collected for this study will be held in confidence and will only be able to be accessed by the researchers. Results of the evaluation will be disseminated back to the respective agencies and funding bodies by way of a written report. At the completion of the study, data and documentation will be locked and stored for a period of 3 years at the University, after which it will be destroyed. The research study has been approved by the University of Western Australia Research Ethics Committee.

If you require further information about the study, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers, whose details appear below.

................................. ........................ (Chief Investigator)

Faculty of Medicine and Health
University of Western Australia
Phone: XXX Email: XXXXX

If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

Research Ethics Officer Phone: XXXXX Email: XXXXXX
References:


