



## What is the Nursing research agenda for the COVID-19 pandemic?

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In 2020 we celebrated 200 years since the birth of Florence Nightingale, the founder of professional nursing, a pioneer in the use of statistics, and a promoter of social reforms that preceded welfare states<sup>(1)</sup>.

In 2018, in celebration of her bicentennial, the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the International Council of Nursing (ICN) launched the Nursing Now campaign to boost the debate regarding nursing profiles worldwide<sup>(2)</sup>. The World Health Assembly designated 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, calling upon the world leaders to make massive investments in order to improve and support the performance of these professionals facing the health challenges of the 21st century<sup>(3-4)</sup>. Above all, in this exact year, health professionals, in particular nurses, became the centre of attention due to the advent of COVID-19, officially declared as a pandemic by WHO on March 11, 2020<sup>(5)</sup>.

The essential role of health care professionals during this pandemic is a milestone in contemporary history. Among many contributions of nursing in the context of healthcare, noticeable performances regarding health education, infection prevention and disease surveillance, organization and preparation of long-term services, protection of people with chronic diseases, as well as acute care of severe cases with COVID-19 have been observed<sup>(6-9)</sup>.

As the largest category of health professionals worldwide<sup>(10)</sup>, nurses have done monumental work, each time being more and more evidence-based. However, among the numerous calls for research funding to support the response to COVID-19, to our knowledge, none have been identified to be specifically designed to aid in nursing research. In the rapid effervescence of several research groups that have built up, everything seems to indicate that nursing research remains subsumed in the knowledge of other disciplines<sup>(10)</sup>. In multidisciplinary groups of researchers in public health, this can be seen as a gain. However, it could also be a loss with regards to nursing knowledge, and furthermore in prestige spots in the decision-making arena and, mainly, opportunities for qualification of the nursing care.

Parallel to the participation in multidisciplinary teams, nursing research groups should build partnerships with each other in order to strengthen research capabilities that meet our specificity, preferably in multinational groups in order to expand the potential for the generalization of results and fundraising.

We aim to call upon nurses to work together throughout an agenda of research priorities in nursing to be investigated. In a rapid review of research conducted by nurses, we have identified themes and sub-themes of interest, and proposed some that we considered more relevant to be developed in nursing research (Chart 1).

<p><b>1 – Psychosocial aspects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety, stigma, stress and coping of nursing teams in the management of COVID-19;</li> <li>• Experiences of nurses with the multidisciplinary teams in the care of COVID-19;</li> <li>• Experiences of nurses in the implementation and monitoring of biosafety programs for the reopening of schools, colleges, among others;</li> <li>• Vulnerable communities and the experience of nurses with community organizations for the prevention and management of COVID-19;</li> <li>• The role of media and social networks as sources of information and drivers of anxiety and fear, and their impact on nursing teams.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 – Health policies and services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operationalization of COVID-19 clinical protocols for nursing;</li> <li>• Nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic and the interplay with the monitoring and caring of other communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, drug addiction, child and maternal health, urban violence, mental health, oral health, sexual and reproductive health;</li> <li>• Adaptation of biosafety programs in nursing care to reduce the spread of COVID-19;</li> <li>• Defining research in health systems.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 – Health Technologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telenursing care during the COVID-19 epidemic as a way of monitoring suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19, and conditions related to other communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, drug addiction, child and maternal health, urban violence, mental health, oral health, sexual and reproductive health;</li> <li>• Development of applications for remote clinical support of nursing care during the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 – COVID-19 Epidemiology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies on population profiles of those affected in remote areas or vulnerable populations;</li> <li>• Prevalence, incidence, and risk factors of COVID-19 among nursing professionals;</li> <li>• Cost-effectiveness of personal protective equipment among nursing professionals;</li> <li>• Experience of the nursing teams in limiting COVID-19 transmission and case management;</li> <li>• Barriers and enablers to adherence to COVID-19 preventive measures among nursing professionals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 – Nursing Education and research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing education during the pandemic: innovative teaching-learning strategies and impact on nursing care;</li> <li>• Nursing research methodologies applicable in the situation of confinement due to COVID-19;</li> <li>• Strategies to identify, monitor and mitigate anxiety, stress and fear of nursing students due to the COVID-19 pandemic;</li> <li>• Health education care for patients and their families for the prevention and management of COVID-19 in different contexts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6 – Nursing Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of nursing team competencies during health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic;</li> <li>• Ethical dilemmas of the nursing team in the management of cases and post-mortem care during the COVID-19 pandemic;</li> <li>• Management of personal protective equipment in special settings such as haemodialysis clinics, obstetrics, neonatology, among others.</li> </ul>

We do not intend to cover all aspects of research needed for the fight against COVID-19, since this has been widely discussed in international scenarios<sup>(10-11)</sup>. The objective of this article is to provoke reflection and stimulate global thinking on nursing research related to COVID-19.

This proposed agenda calls on nurses at national and international levels to combine efforts, engaging associations and societies, nursing educational institutions, and funding agencies to foster visibility of the production of nursing knowledge. The ultimate goal is to address the universal right to health care access. Thus, nursing research will strengthen Florence Nightingale's legacy.

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