

## TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH - WHAT IS ITS IMPORTANCE TO NURSING PRACTICE?

In recent decades, the initiatives to develop individual, collaborative, or multicentric nursing research have multiplied throughout the world. The objective of such initiative has been to improve the quality of nursing care given, offering greater security to patients and influencing more effective health care policies. Research based on evidence, clinical research, systematic literature reviews, convergent-care research, phenomenological studies, and social representations all share the same objective: to respond to professional practice questions. However, despite all the knowledge such efforts have produced, there is a vacuum among the studies and the use of the results from research carried out in public or hospital health care services.

Translational research has arisen in an attempt to fill in the vacuum and approximate the researcher to fields of practice.<sup>1</sup> While the term is relatively new, the notion of “translating (or transferring) research results” is not, as it has been discussed since the 1970s and 80s in the United States and Brazil in National Nursing Research Seminars. One can highlight that as early as 1984 a study about “how to incorporate nursing research results to professional practice”<sup>2</sup> was proposed.

The first publication on the subject under the classification of translational research is seen in an editorial of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), in 2002, when “(...) the need to translate new knowledge, mechanisms, and techniques generated towards advancing basic research in order to offer new possibilities of preventing, diagnosing, and treating disease”<sup>3:10</sup> is declared to be essential to improving human health. As of this publication, the remaining areas of health sciences, including nursing, have begun to more accurately question their forms manners of conducting such “translation” into care practices.

In 2005, *The Translational Research Working Group* (TRWG), associated with the National Cancer Institute in the USA, was created with the objective of offering incentive and financing translational research, in this specific area. The University of Washington created the *Institute of Translational Health Sciences* (ITHS) in 2007 in order to strengthen genetic medicine. Two relevant periodicals were also created in 2009, *Translational Research - The journal of Laboratory and Clinical Medicine*, and *The American Journal of Translational Research*.

In nursing, the utilization of the concept is that the translation of new knowledge and its incorporation into clinical practice is essential. The growth of the nursing science felt its peak in 2005 when the Nursing Research Society, associated with the University of Columbia’s Nursing School promoted its 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session, placing “The importance of academic and interdisciplinary research ‘translation’ to promoting quality patient care” as its central theme. The Session’s organizers decided to select the best translational research to receive financial awards as well as publication in the *Nursing Research* periodical. Eleven studies were selected for this issue.<sup>3</sup>

The following year, the *National Institute of Nursing Research* in the USA developed a consortium with health care and research institutions involved in translational research in order to create the *Clinical and Translational Science Awards* (CTSAs). The idea of this consortium is to finance translational research throughout the country, attempting to accelerate the “translation” of laboratory treatment discoveries in patient reality, integrating local communities in research, as well as to train a new generation of translational researchers and clinicians.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, one aspect which researchers who defend translational research focus upon is the importance of interdisciplinary work in developing studies

which may not only resolve health care problems for patients and communities, but also influence the formation of health care policies conducive to the population's needs.

I think that the Brazilian Nursing scientific community, while it has not assumed translational research as the central object of its scientific production, has manifested the same concern in promoting, financing, and giving incentive to the development of intervention research, or research which provokes change within practical care, within the resolution of important health care problems, like cancer, cardiovascular issues, diabetes, obesity, AIDS, and others.

The vacuum which must still be fulfilled, in my view, is the strengthening of studies which truly seek to transform and integrate the scientific community and the care community. In order to do so, partnerships between schools, community organizations, health care services, and scientists are essential within an alteration of roles from those who produce knowledge to that which applies the knowledge produced.

Scientific periodicals also have the responsibility to offer readers original articles which truly contain innovation, simple measurements, and practical and effective results which may be successfully applied throughout the country, even internationally. Thus, selecting original articles for each of its quarterly publications is one of the greatest commitments and contributions of *Texto & Contexto Nursing Journal*.

## REFERENCES

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