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**Dialogue and Monologue.**

**The relationship between student nurse and nurse  
clinician: The impact on student learning.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of**

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## Abstract

Student nurse learning that occurs in the clinical setting is an important aspect of the comprehensive nursing curriculum in New Zealand. While nurse lecturers have responsibility for student learning in clinical settings, it is the nurse clinicians that students rely on for the day-to-day facilitation of their learning. The purpose of this descriptive interpretive study was to explore the relationship between student nurse and nurse clinician in the clinical setting. The researcher was interested in student nurse perceptions of their relationships with nurse clinicians and whether the relationship impacted on student learning.

A cohort of 11 student nurses at the end of their three years of study participated in focus group interviews. Data gathered from the three focus groups were analysed using an inductive approach. Three themes emerged from data analysis and are represented using Buber's (2002) theory of relationships as a theoretical framework. The themes are 'A Monologue', 'A Technical Dialogue' and 'A Genuine Dialogue'. A story of student nurses relationships with nurse clinicians has been created, using the participants' words, in the form of journal entries. These entries provide insight into the nature of the relationship between the student nurse and nurse clinician.

The relationships between student nurses and nurse clinicians are not always positive. However when both students and nurse clinicians actively participate in the relationship and student nurses feel their learning is promoted and supported, student learning is enhanced.

Student nurses attitudes to learning and to remaining in the profession of nursing are influenced by the relationships they have with nurse clinicians. Therefore the relationships between the two impact on important issues for the profession of nursing. This study highlights the important links between a positive learning environment for student nurses during their clinical learning experiences, and the recruitment and retention of newly registered nurses in the clinical environment.

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