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**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLINICAL EDUCATION  
ROLE AS PERCEIVED BY REGISTERED NURSES  
WORKING IN THE PRACTICE SETTING**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

Although clinical education has long been acknowledged as the heart of nursing education, the role of the nurse lecturer in relation to the clinical learning experience of nursing students, is an area of long standing confusion and dispute. The many advances in technology, nursing science, and the professional role, have not been accompanied by substantive change in the approach to clinical education. Research to date has focused on the lecturers' and students' perceptions of the clinical education role.

This study describes the characteristics of the clinical education role as perceived by ten registered nurses working a practice setting. The participants in the study were employed by a Crown Health Enterprise which has for many years, served as a clinical practice agency for a department of nursing within an educational institute. All the participants were employed as registered nurses within the general medical and surgical wards.

A qualitative, descriptive and exploratory study was undertaken. Face to face, semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data. This was then analysed using thematic content analysis. Findings from the data revealed five characteristics of the clinical education role as perceived by Registered Nurses working in the practice setting. The clinical education role in its present form changes registered nurses relationship with their patients and changes their pattern of work. It requires good communication with nurse lecturers, preparation for the role, and needs to provide nursing students with the opportunity to learn.

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# CONTENT

Abstract .....	i
Acknowledgments .....	ii
Table of contents .....	iii

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction .....	1
Significance of the study .....	2
Aim of the study .....	2
Research interest in the study .....	2
Organisation of the thesis .....	3

## Chapter 2 Historical developments of clinical education in New Zealand education

Background to the study .....	4
Women as healers in New Zealand .....	4
Mother - daughter apprenticeship in nursing practice.....	4
Early development of hospitals .....	5
Influence of Nightingale nurses on clinical education.....	5
Introduction of nurse training in New Zealand .....	6
Grace Neill's influence on clinical education .....	7
Introduction of regulations for schools of nursing .....	8
Hospital schools of nursing .....	9
Introduction of demonstration rooms within schools of nursing .....	10
Introduction of Sister Tutors.....	11

Clinical Tutors .....	12
Apprenticeship model of nursing clinical education .....	12
Development of a separation between practice and education .....	14
The 1973 transfer of nursing education into educational institutions...	15
The aim of the transfer of nursing education .....	16
Clinical education in the changing health services in the 1990s .....	17
Clinical education 1994-1998 .....	19
Summary .....	21
<b>Chapter 3      Literature Review of clinical education</b>	
Introduction .....	23
Nursing education .....	24
Nurse lecturer role .....	27
Nurse lecturers role in clinical teaching .....	29
Clinical supervision .....	31
Theory to practice gap .....	34
Clinical teaching .....	38
Summary .....	40
<b>Chapter 4      Methodology</b>	
Introduction .....	41
Research study design .....	41
Descriptive research .....	43
Exploratory research .....	43
Content analysis .....	44
Thematic content analysis .....	44

Study participants .....	45
Profile of study participants.....	47
Ethical considerations.....	48
Approval Process.....	48
Conflict of interest for the researcher.....	49
Consent of participants .....	49
Anonymity of participants.....	49
Interview format and data collection .....	50
Data analysis process.....	51
Recurring themes identified .....	52
Common themes .....	53
The five characteristics .....	53
Validity of study.....	54
Summary .....	54
The next five chapters.....	54
<b>Chapter 5      It changes the registered nurses relationship with                          their patients</b>	
Introduction .....	55
Nurse - patient relationship.....	56
Nurse - student relationship.....	64
Summary .....	66
<b>Chapter 6      It changes the registered nurses pattern of work</b>	
Introduction .....	68
Summary .....	84

<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>It requires good communication between registered nurse and nurse lecturers</b>	
	Introduction .....	85
	Registered nurses communication with nurse lecturers.....	86
	Summary .....	100
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b>It requires the registered nurse to be prepared for the clinical education role</b>	
	Introduction .....	101
	Preparation for the role .....	102
	Summary .....	110
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<b>It requires the student nurse to have the opportunity to learn in the practice setting</b>	
	Introduction .....	111
	Summary .....	125
<b>Chapter 10</b>	<b>Discussion of findings</b>	
	Introduction .....	126
	Implications for nursing.....	144
	Summary .....	149
<b>Chapter 11</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>147</b>
	Limitations of this study.....	149
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Participants information sheet .....	150
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Participants consent form .....	152
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Transcribers confidentiality form .....	153
<b>References</b>	.....	154