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**CHALLENGING THE BOUNDARIES:  
AN INITIATIVE TO EXTEND PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING  
PRACTICE**

**AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts  
in Nursing at Massey University

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CHALLENGING THE BOUNDARIES: AN INITIATIVE TO EXTEND PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING PRACTICE**

Public health nurses working in the Child and Youth Team, Child and Family Services, Auckland Healthcare, view their practice in relation to children and their families, with the primary focus being on the child. Public health nurses could well provide other appropriate assistance and intervention for families and this is the focus of this research project.

The purpose for this Action Research project is to provide a process where public health nurses can examine their existing practice and ask: What knowledge and skills would an advanced public health nurse practitioner require to work autonomously and effectively in a 'family centred' clinic within a primary school environment?

A convenience sample of competency level III and IV public health nurses in the Child and Youth Team, Child and Family Services, Auckland Healthcare were invited to take part in a collaborative / participatory working group.

Using a process of collective inquiry and reflection the working group developed a 'portfolio' from which to define an advanced public health nurse practitioner. The recommendations made by the working group provide a vision of practice.

The challenge to public health nurses now is to make this practice a reality.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

### CHAPTER ONE

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
My role within the research.....	2
Definition of ‘family centred’ care.....	3
Use of the first person .....	5
Technical features.....	6
Structure of the thesis.....	6

### CHAPTER TWO

<b>BACKGROUND INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
------------------------------------	----------

### CHAPTER THREE

<b>THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Methodology of Action Research.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Disadvantages of Action Research.....	30
Advantages to Action Research.....	32
Examples of Action Research in practice.....	34
Choice of Action Research for this study.....	36
<b>The Research Design.....</b>	<b>38</b>
The proposal.....	39
The Action Research process.....	40

Recruiting co-researchers.....	40
Data collection.....	42
Potential to harm.....	43
The researcher.....	44
Use of the study information.....	44

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

<b>THE RESEARCH PROCESS: THE GROUP AT WORK.....</b>	<b>46</b>
The different venues.....	46
Group dynamics.....	48
Literature used to assist in the development of the ‘portfolio’.....	53

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

<b>THE RESEARCH PROCESS: SETTING THE SCENE.....</b>	<b>60</b>
Nurse managed health initiatives.....	61
The practice of a PHN today.....	63
Problems associated with PHN practice.....	71
Name change.....	72

## **CHAPTER SIX**

<b>THE VISION.....</b>	<b>69</b>
Developing the scope of practice.....	79

Competency level.....	80
Senior nurse practitioner role.....	81
Experience verses master's degree.....	38
Alienating women.....	86
Prescribing.....	87
Bi Cultural Awareness.....	88

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

<b>THE ADVANCED PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER: THE 'PORTFOLO'.....</b>	<b>90</b>
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## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

<b>DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>The emergent issues from the study.....</b>	<b>95</b>
Difficulty articulating practice.....	97
The masters degree debate.....	98
Effectiveness of the Senior Nurse Practitioner role.....	100
Community development model.....	100
Ability to empower families.....	102
Alienating women.....	103
Generalist versus specialist.....	105
'Walking beside' families.....	106
The different venues.....	106

Limitations of this study.....	108
Impact of research on PHN practice.....	109
Implications of this study for nursing education.....	110
Future studies.....	111
Recommendations.....	113
A personal reflection.....	114
Concluding statement.....	114
<b>APPENDIX 1 Information Sheet.....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2 Consent Form.....</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>119</b>



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**ANP:** Advanced Nurse Practitioner.

**Hapu:** An alliance of several whanau (extended Maori family) with a common ancestor.

**Iwi:** An alliance of several hapu with a common ancestor.

**Mana Whenua:** Maori people who have the traditional association with area, treasure and resources of the land. Associated with traditional land occupation.

**Ottawa Charter:** Health Promotion. Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realise aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for every day life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyles to well-being (World Health Organisation, 1986).

**PHN:** Public Health Nurse.

**Rohe:** The specific area (catchment) of Maori land.

**SNP:** Senior Nurse Practitioner, Public Health Nurse.

**Tangata Whenua:** Maori people of the land; host; the original inhabitants.

**Taonga:** Maori treasure and resources of the land.

**Treaty of Waitangi:** The Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand's founding document. It established the relationship between the Crown and Maori as Tangata Whenua (first peoples) and requires both the Crown and Maori to act reasonably towards each other and with utmost good faith (Ministry of Health, 1997b).