

# Nurses' preparedness to deliver care to children with complex care needs: An integrative review



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## Background

Advances in the field of medicine have increased the number of children living longer with complex conditions, and with that the need for an optimal environment with high quality health care. The move towards primary care attempts to facilitate the psychosocial needs of children with complex care needs and their families. Care settings now extend from hospitals to the community, including children's own homes. Nurses play a key role in the care of children in these settings. The knowledge and training acquired by the nurses working with children and families has to be targeted in order to deliver optimal and high level care. This study is part of the EU funded project: Models of Child Health Appraised (MOCHA).

## Purpose

The purpose of the study is to explore theoretical and empirical literature to achieve a better understanding of nurses' preparedness for the care of children with complex care needs and their families. This poster presents the preliminary findings of an integrative review on the topics: *Education* and *skills*.

## Methods

### Integrative Review: Search Strategy

#### Search Terms

Several words, including synonyms and Medical SubHeading (MeSH) terms, were used to define four key areas:



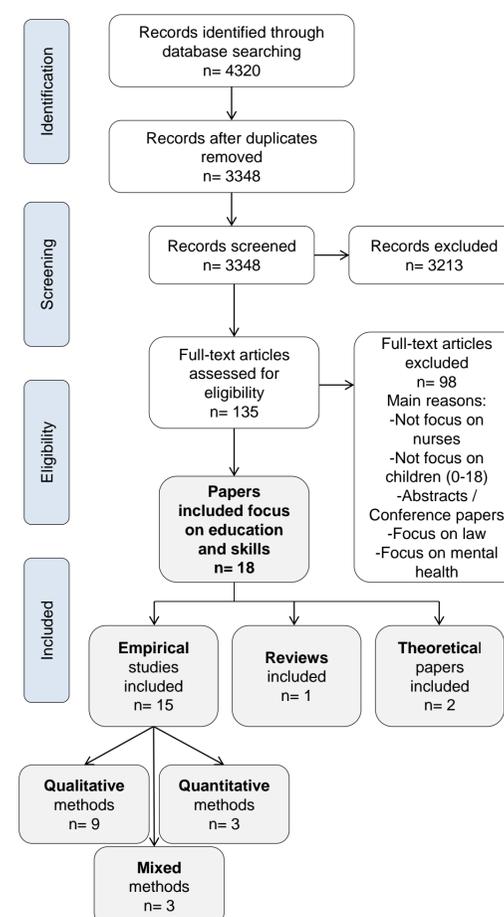
#### Electronic Databases

A systematic approach was used to search theoretical and empirical papers in different electronic databases (CINAHL, PubMed, InterNurse journals, EMBASE, PsychInfo and Cochrane Library).

#### Inclusion Criteria

- English Language
- Last 10 Years
- From European Countries
- Focus on Nurses' Education and Skills

## Search Outcomes



## Preliminary Results

Two main themes emerged from the review of the papers:

### 1. Improvement of nursing educational preparation

Papers on undergraduate programs, short training courses and continued education were identified.

#### Undergraduate training

Nine articles described methods to enhance nurses' educational preparation at bachelor level. These are the main findings:

<b>Program development/design</b>	- Involving children
<b>Academic curricula</b>	- Improving teaching/learning strategies - Implementing placements in the community (home and school) - Implementing interprofessional experiences - Paying adequate attention to disabilities
<b>Assessment/evaluation</b>	- Improving student's clinical skills assessment

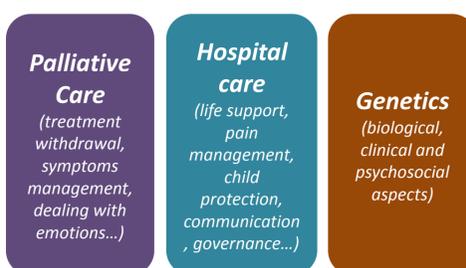
### Short training courses

Three papers focused on short courses for either undergraduate or postgraduate students. The purpose of the courses was to support education delivered within the main academic curriculum. Two informed about courses on communication skills, and the third paper focused on pediatric palliative care.

#### Continued education

One article described continued training programs for nurses at work settings. In particular, intensive care settings.

Four papers focused on the educational needs of nurses working with children. Three main areas were targeted:



## 2. Skills required for nurses working with children

Three papers focused on the views of children, parents and stakeholders on necessary skills and attributes nurses should have in order to provide nursing care of children.

These are the main findings:

- Clinical Skills**
- Personal attributes:** Communication skills, being friendly, kind, reassuring, empathetic, caring...
- Multidisciplinary working**
- Partnership working**

## Implications

Research carried out by the nurse led team in the MOCHA group shows that very few European countries require paediatric specialization to look after children with complex care needs. The results of this integrative review provide valuable information on how to enhance the nursing care of children and their families by giving insight into areas where nursing knowledge and training can be improved. The perceptions of children and families are important and can contribute to improving academic nursing curricula.

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