

Member profile for QNI Community Nursing Research Forum



Name: Brian Nyatanga

Job title: Senior academic. Editorial board member British Journal of Community Nursing. Consultant Editor, International Journal of Palliative Nursing

Employing organisation: University of Worcester

Country of residence: England

How would you describe your current role and research interests?

I am a senior academic and educator in palliative and end of life care. My research interest is driven by the desire to understand, through exploration, different peoples experience of health and ill-health as they approach end of life. To date I have included patients, their close relations and health professionals as participants to generate new knowledge of these experiences and then recommend strategies to help improve and make a difference to episodes of dying.

How did you first get involved in doing clinical research / your own research?

After I completed my doctoral studies, I was keen to engage in post-doctoral work as a way of using my newly acquired research knowledge and skills. I also wanted to make a wider difference by generating new knowledge to increase our understanding of the experiences people encounter in palliative care.

What difference has your research training and experience made to your career / clinical practice / academic practice?

The nature of my research is qualitative, and therefore acts as a mouthpiece by giving participants a voice to share their experiences. My research methods employ individualised face-to-face interviews that allow participants a platform to reflect, interpret and make sense of their own stories and then tell me about them in a confidential and safe environment. I have had the opportunity to travel globally disseminating and sharing my research experiences at international conference, symposiums, study tours to China, Europe, and visiting lectures to Australia and Africa. I also set up a Centre for Palliative Care and led it for six years to promote research in palliative care to clinicians and students.

What has been your favourite research experience so far?

How long do you have? There are many; I always find joy and enlightenment when I research in partnership with other research enthusiasts. Recently, I was part of a large research project with colleagues from Oxford University where we interviewed health professionals from 16 NHS Trusts about their experiences of working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The richness

of data from these interviews compelled us to write two papers for publication; this is another passion, to share research findings with others.

How did you develop your research career?

To be honest, I had to build my research career under the university academic pressure to teach most of the hours. My ideal plan was to find a niche area to research so that I could generate a hub of new knowledge, but reality ended up taking me to different topics (although in palliative care), which on reflection have contributed new knowledge, but not build up a hub.

The other factor that did not help my research career was that I was not that successful in obtaining research grants; I was determined to not dwell on that and still pursue some interesting projects without funding. I realise there is a lot of competition for funding and those that I managed to secure were in partnership with other colleagues at other Universities. The take home message – collegiality is the best way to enjoy research while learning from others too.

What are your top tips for anyone wanting to become a clinical academic / become more research active?

Research can be a dry subject, so I would suggest:

- Choosing topics that interest you, to ensure you remain motivated;
- Research that makes a difference to patients and their close relations;
- Be resilient, and never accept 'NO' as the end point in your quest to achieve your research ambitions;
- Be confident in your knowledge of research methods. Such knowledge will come very handy when you write papers for publication on your research;
- Be eager to publish your research findings and methodologies used for the benefit of other researchers and clinicians.

Where can we access your recent work?

I have three research articles in print being reviewed with journal editors. Below are a few papers published with colleagues.

- **Nyatanga, B.**, Cook, D., Goddard, A. (2018) A prospective research study to investigate the impact of complementary therapies on patient well-being in palliative care. *Complementary therapies in Clinical Practice*. 31: 118-125
- Webb, W., Mitchell, T., **Nyatanga, B.**, Snelling, P. (2020) Life is hard and then you die: The end-of-life priorities of people experiencing homelessness in the UK. *IJPN* 26(3) March 2020
- Reeves, A.I., **Nyatanga, B.**, Neilson, S.J. (2021) Transforming empathy to empathetic practice amongst nursing and drama students. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Theatre and Performance*. DOI: [10.1080/13569783.2021.1876556](https://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2021.1876556): First published online 01 Feb 2021
- Mitchell, T., **Nyatanga, B.**, Lillyman, S., Bruce, M., Brayne, S. (2021). Using Death Cafes as a Method for Discussing Death and Dying with 3rd year Student Nurses: *IJPN* 27(7) Sept 2021.

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