

Creating the Conditions for Growth

**Professor Brendan McCormack,
Professor of Nursing Research, Institute
of Nursing Research, University of Ulster**

**Effective practice =
effective workplaces**

Characteristics of a ‘Strong Context’ (McCormack et al 2002)

- Appropriate & transparent decision-making.
- Boundaries clearly defined.
- Power & authority defined.
- Adequate resources.
- Appropriate information & feedback systems.
- Receptive to change.
- Individual staff and clients are valued.
- Promotes learning in and from practice.
- Transformational leadership.
- Individual and performance feedback/evaluation

- Strong contexts have a positive impact on patient outcome [*e.g. Aiken et al, 2002*]
- Higher reported levels of emotional exhaustion associated with poor context [*Estabrooks et al, 2007*]
- Nurses working in 'better' contexts report significantly more research utilization, more staff development, and lower rates of patient and staff adverse events than those in less positive contexts [*Cummings et al, 2007*]
- Positive relationships in teams impact positively on staff development opportunities, research use and autonomy over decision-making [*Slater & McCormack, in progress*]

Developing an effective workplace = changing patterns

Service Development		Practice Development
Structures	Processes	Patterns (after Plsek 2001)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisation boundaries • layout of equipment, facilities, departments • roles, responsibilities • teams, committees and working groups • targets, goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patient journeys, care pathways • supporting processes such as requesting, ordering, delivering, dispensing • funding flows, recruitment of staff, procurement of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>decision-making</i>: Rapid by experts vs hierarchy and position bound. • <i>relationships</i>: generate energy for new ideas vs draining of energy. • <i>conflict</i>: opportunities to embrace ideas vs negative and destructive feedback. • <i>power use</i>: power to enable vs power over. • <i>learning</i>: Eager to learn and improve vs learning that is threatening and risky to the status quo.

Patterns are often ignored or go unchallenged despite changes to structures and processes (Plsek 2001; III 2005). This is because patterns are associated with distinctive behavioural norms that manifest specific values, beliefs and assumptions within a workplace.

These aspects together by definition are termed 'culture' (Schein, 2004) where implicit importance is placed on how things are done and what counts as important. To bring about fundamental change in complex systems requires the recognition of patterns that drive thinking and behaviour (Plsek 2001).

Changing patterns is not just a matter of changing ideas of individual practitioners alone, but also discovering, analysing and transforming the social, cultural, discursive and material conditions under which practice occurs

Determining Factors that impact upon
effective evidence based pain
management with older people, following
abdominal surgery.

(Donna Brown – PhD study)

- What are the relationships between the contextual factors impacting on person-centered practice?
- What facilitation approaches can best address these?

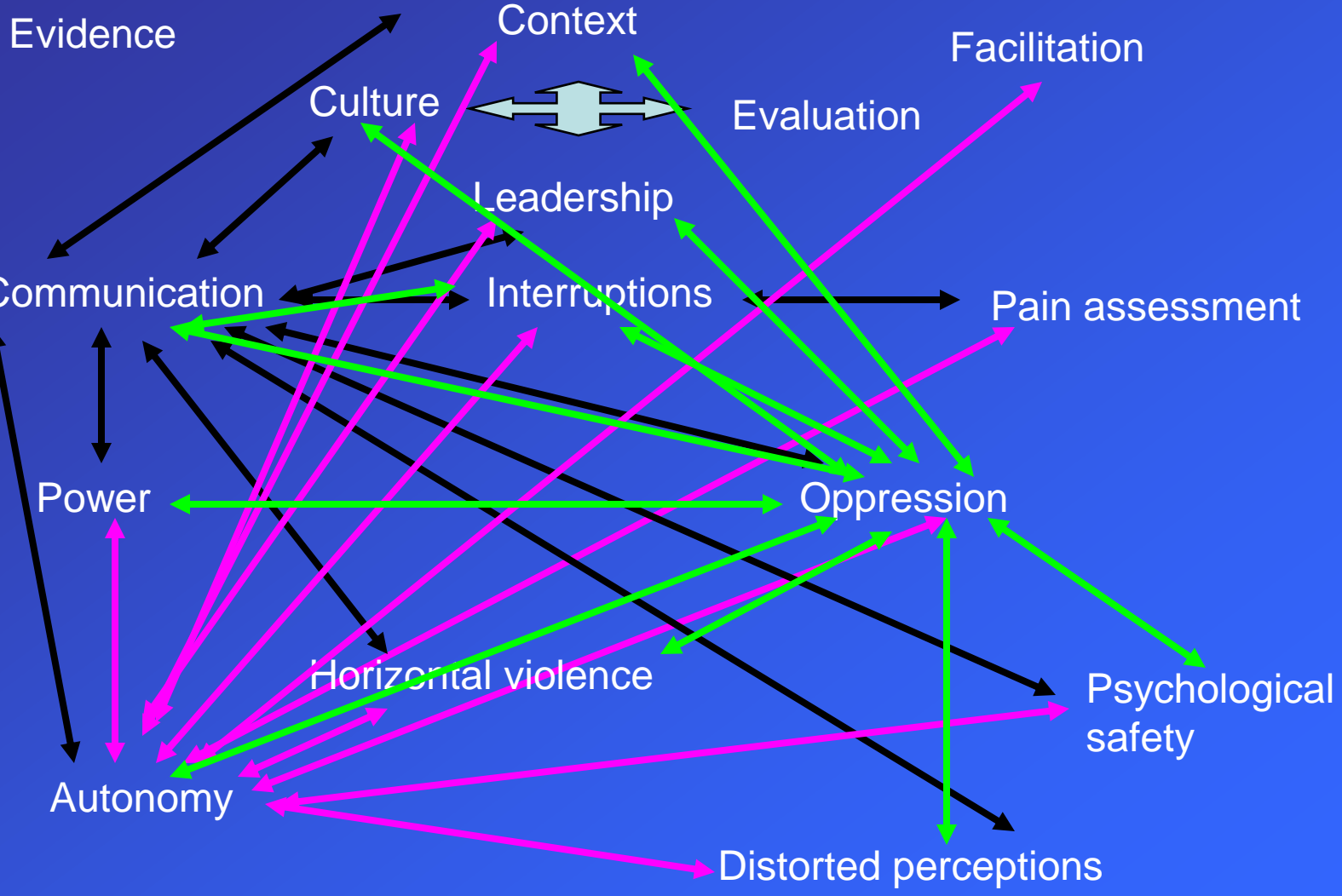
Factors compromising pain management practices with older people

Ethno

PARIHS

**Action
Cycles**

**Conceptual
Themes**



“Practice Development gave us the permission or license to do what we had always wanted to do”.

- PD is ‘micro-system’ oriented and context specific.
- The ultimate purpose of PD is the development of person-centred care systems/workplaces.
- PD works with individuals and teams to:
 - engage with a shared vision
 - create links with their own aspirations
 - translate complex organisational and strategic agendas into practice reality
 - make sense of complex forms of evidence
 - become clear about what constitutes person centred care.
 - move the energy that would otherwise have been expended in conflictual agendas and resistance towards shared agendas.
 - facilitate the system as a whole to re-engage with the untapped potential lying within the healthcare workforce and their patients.

A realist synthesis of Evidence Relating to Practice Development

A study for NHS Education & NHS Quality Improvement
Scotland

<http://www.nhshealthquality.org/nhsqis/3134.html>

Professor Brendan McCormack – University of Ulster/Royal Hospitals Trust, Belfast

Belinda Dewar - Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh

Jayne Wright, Research Associate, University of Ulster

Dr Gill Harvey – Manchester Business School, University of Manchester

Robert Garbett – University of Ulster/Royal Hospitals Trust, Belfast

The University of Manchester
Manchester
Business School



Queen Margaret University College
EDINBURGH



“Creating the Conditions for Growth” Programme

- Programme Team:
 - Professor Brendan McCormack
 - Christine Boomer
 - Elizabeth Henderson
 - Ita Collin
 - David Robinson
 - Janet Robson

Methodology

- Emancipatory Practice Development and Realistic Evaluation
- 3-year programme
- Co-facilitation model

Critical Social Science is About:

- Becoming aware of how we practice & the things we take for granted (*enlightenment*)
- Developing an awareness of how the system impacts on the way we work (*enlightenment*)
- Identifying the contradictions between what we espouse and what we do (*enlightenment*)
- Challenging the system in which we work to create the potential for better patient care (*empowerment*)
- Actually changing how we practice to reflect individual and collective beliefs and values (*emancipation*)
- Continually refining action in light of new understandings gained through reflecting on practice (*emancipation*)
- Generating knowledge from and about the processes used & what is effective (*emancipation*)

Aims

1. Develop a programme of work aimed at increasing nursing effectiveness
2. Develop leadership potential of staff
3. Develop practice development knowledge and skills among staff
4. Evaluate processes and outcomes

Three cycles of action

1. Developing a shared vision
2. The context of care delivery
3. Maximising leadership potential

Integrated facilitation and data collection methods

- Visioning
- Values clarification
- Observation (everyday practice and nurse handover)
- Work-systems classification
- Interviewing (multidisciplinary staff and patients)
- Action learning
- Action planning

Outcomes



- Understanding practice context is essential to EBP/KU/KT.
- Person-centred and evidence-based workplaces have a significant impact on patient experience and nurses work-life.
- No simple solution to changing workplace cultures.
- Practice development with its focus on 'reflexivity' has much to offer.
- Facilitated reflective strategies help to unravel deeply embedded cultural characteristics of context.
- Approaches to the measurement of context need to account for contextual complexity.