



Editorial | He Whakaaro nā te Ētita

Forty Years of Nursing Praxis: Judith Clare Reflects on Establishing a National Nursing Journal

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Nursing Praxis in Aotearoa New Zealand

As the first Editor-in-Chief of (what is now called) *Nursing Praxis in Aotearoa New Zealand*, I am reading the latest articles published in this journal with immense gratitude and pride in our nursing workforce.

In the very first edition of *Nursing Praxis* in 1985, I wrote that nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand needed and should have a professional avenue for writing and reading about their practice. The Carpenter Report (1971) had heralded the need to shift nurse training from a hospital-based apprenticeship model to nurses being academically prepared by the tertiary education sector. This shift required a scholarly approach to the generation of nursing knowledge and practice based on evidence, in turn supporting the demand for the greater recognition of nurses, their autonomy to practice independently, and the drive towards higher professional status (Clare et al., 1995). The time seemed right to try to develop our own journal to demonstrate our expertise in practice, education and research.

Nursing research was a relatively new endeavour and was viewed with much scepticism. I was told emphatically that nurses did not do nor read research and would not understand it if they did. Perhaps this was because those nurses did not see themselves, nor their practice here at home reflected in international journals. Yet further, those naysayers declared that the effort to produce a journal with no backing, no funding and no audience would be wasted. With a lot of passion, quite a bit of anger and lots of determination I decided to do it anyway. Nurses deserved their own professional journal with articles that resonated with their ideas, culture and practice, wherever that might be.

So with a group of friends and colleagues from a range of practice settings (leadership, aged care, education, clinical hospital and community nursing) we set about discovering how to make a journal (Clare et al., 1995). Following much deliberation and some feisty debate, we chose to use Paolo Freire's (1970) concept of praxis: the action and reflection of people upon their world to transform it. Importantly, for us, was a journal which bridged academia and practice and was grounded in principles of social justice to demonstrate the value of nursing to Aotearoa New Zealand. Janet Takarangi approached artist Sam Rolleston for a koru and a colour for the journal. Offers of help to ensure the journal would be bicultural and authentic were especially welcomed. Irihapeti Ramsden, Yvonne Shadbolt, Pamela Wood and others, too many to include here, joined us. It was one of the most exciting times in my professional life.

Five years later it was clear that *Nursing Praxis* had not only survived but was accepted by a relatively wide readership. It was increasingly clear that the journal needed a



Photo of Judith Clare (September, 2026)

professional organisation to support it. In 1991 we invited all nurses to a meeting in Palmerston North to discuss the future of *Nursing Praxis* and the possibility of creating a professional college for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand. Enthusiasm to continue the journal and to set up a College was awe-inspiring. A project team led by Isobel Hawley, supported by Yvonne Shadbolt and others, including Irihapeti Ramsden, did the early work to establish the College (Clare & Shadbolt, 1991). Since that time, *Nursing Praxis* has been the official peer-reviewed journal of the College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ).

The dissemination of nursing knowledge and writing for publication in a journal requires considerable tenacity. Support and mentorship from nurse academics is critical to develop a manuscript reporting research findings. Many nurses are undertaking postgraduate studies and undertaking research or quality improvement projects as part of their master's programmes. This new knowledge should be widely shared. *Nursing Praxis* intended to be, and continues to be, a platform for new and emerging writers to hone their skills and gain a first academic publication; as well as for established leaders and academics to publish and impact practice and policy.

I am sure that there are hundreds of nurses who discuss among themselves the current situation in practice and the political decisions that make everything more difficult to provide excellent care. Nurses have a particular duty to comment on political decisions promoting changes to practice and the health system. Writing about safe nursing care through safe staffing levels, is not just for nursing's own benefit; it has a direct effect on patient care and nurses have a professional duty to publish their frustration at the way nursing is managed. We see, at times, rather obscure political decisions having a profound effect on nursing which need to be brought to light. As a profession we need to research and write our concerns and submit them for publication. We need to hear from *all* nurses to make our professional interests more available to each other and to a wider audience, including for the general public. There is a plethora of unpublished nursing research and stories in Aotearoa New Zealand and nurses should feel obligated to publish it.

Therefore, it is with nostalgia and some pride, that I submit this editorial for publication forty-one years later, to *Nursing Praxis in Aotearoa New Zealand*, the journal of the College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ). It is a testament to the energy and enthusiasm of all those who have worked as editors, the many reviewers, and all those who have contributed articles, supported and continue to support, our treasured nursing journal.

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Biographical note: Dr Judith Clare

Judith Clare (née Perry) was the chief editor of *Nursing Praxis in Aotearoa New Zealand* from its first issue in November 1985 until 1993. Judith was a senior lecturer at Massey University where she was awarded her doctorate in 1991, Teaching and learning in nursing education: A critical approach (Clare, 1991a). Her work has been grounded in challenging the relationships of power to improve nursing's legitimacy and autonomy (see, for example, *Nursing Praxis*, Clare, 1991b). Raising critical consciousness and empowerment - of nurses, educators and the people we serve - is central to Judith's work. Judith moved to Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia in 1994 as an Associate Professor where she furthered her interest in undergraduate education, transition to practice and innovative partnerships between practice and academia. Judith became a Professor of Nursing at Flinders in 1995. In 2005, she went to Norway as Professor of Knowledge Based Health Care. She has been first supervisor of 26 PhDs. Judith retired in 2007 and returned to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2016.

'Quote of the day' from Judith

Change the curriculum - or transform the conditions of practice? (Clare, 1993, p. 285)

"Thus the dominant values and beliefs of policy and decision makers in education and the health service permeate and shape the consciousness of teachers and students of nursing. Hegemonic ideology induces our consent to an educational order which does not serve our real interests. It functions to conceal or misrepresent the real conflicts of interests - political and economic - and, in effect, it makes teachers and students conscious participants in their own domination."

Note provided by Sue Adams, Editor-in-Chief, *Nursing Praxis in Aotearoa New Zealand*



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