



At the core – Our Professional Confidence and Identity as Nurses

Join a series of workshops to explore together

Virtual Workshops

If you're interested in reflecting more on your professional identity so you feel more confident and grounded in your work and want to have more impact, join us for a series of 5 virtual workshops

3.00-4:30pm (UTC/GMT)

16th November Thursday

7th December Thursday

11th January Thursday

7th February Wednesday

13th March Wednesday

Register your interest [here](#). There are 50 places available.

In the evolving landscape of healthcare, I have become increasingly concerned about the potential loss of the nurses' professional identity. As roles shift and technologies advance, we risk sidelining the unique contributions that define us to meet ever increasing demands upon a burgeoning health system with extraordinarily little thought given to role integrity and its subsequent impact on the profession and its purpose for society.

Our identity is not just a title; it's a commitment to acting as a bridge between scientific knowledge and compassionate care and practice. Safeguarding this identity ensures that we integrate any advancement with our core purpose to society as advocates, educators, and validators of the therapeutic skills and relational aspects of person-centered nursing care.

Central to our effectiveness is the cultivation of professional confidence and identity – a fact that holds immeasurable value, not only for nurses but also the wider healthcare ecosystemⁱ.

Our professional confidence flourishes as we continue to build expertise. It's a shared belief in our capacity to make critical decisions, deliver competent care, navigate complex situationsⁱⁱ. This confidence isn't born solely from textbook knowledge and technical skills; it's rooted in the accumulation of experience, the mastery of skills, and the commitment to our craft which very often requires us to meet the need 'in the moment' and respond creatively with the person in our careⁱⁱⁱ. Such confidence empowers us, enabling us to confront challenges head-on with the intent to safeguard the well-being of those we care for, be it at individual or community level.

Coupled with professional confidence, a strong nursing identity is equally crucial. A distinct nursing identity reaffirms the unique contribution we nurses bring to the healthcare table not least the pivotal role in co ordinating the wider multidisciplinary team around the patient^{iv}. A clear nursing identity enhances the understanding of the nursing profession among our multidisciplinary team colleagues, resulting in a more cohesive and effective care delivery system.

When nurses exude such confidence, patients and their families find solace in our care. Trust blossoms, leading to stronger therapeutic relationships that can significantly impact patient outcomes.

For our organisations when we work and speak from a place of clarity about our contribution this can translate into improved patient satisfaction, enhanced quality of care, and better retention rates. Healthcare organisations thrive when their nursing staff embodies a strong professional identity, as it fosters motivation and builds retention and recruitment^v.

What is at stake?

My good friend David Wright, a leading nurse thinker, will always pose this question; what is at stake in my action or inaction? I would suggest that amid the mounting pressures of healthcare and technological advancements, the role of the nurse is often moulded to meet immediate needs, sometimes at the expense of our professional purpose and integrity. The words of G. A. Eadie resonate deeply for me: "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything."

In such times, nurses with unwavering professional identities can make a position, raise their voices, advocate for policy changes, and contribute to decisions that shape both current and future service provision. As we stand together, our firm identity remains a cornerstone, ensuring that our contributions endure within the intricate fabric of healthcare.

Written by Marie Cooper
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ⁱ Papanthanasou IV, Fradelos EC, Kleisiaris CF, Tsaras K, Kalota MA, Kourkouta L. Motivation, leadership, empowerment and confidence: their relationship with nurses' burnout. *Mater Sociomed*. 2014 Dec;26(6):405-10. doi: 10.5455/msm.2014.26.405-410. Epub 2014 Dec 14.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4314154/>

ⁱⁱ Jennifer Ortiz, New graduate nurses' experiences about lack of professional confidence, *Nurse Education in Practice*, Volume 19, 2016, Pages 19-24, ISSN 1471-5953, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2016.04.001>

ⁱⁱⁱ Benner. P (1984) *From Novice to Expert* Addison Wesley Press

^{iv} Sekse, RJT, Hunskaar, I, Ellingsen, S. The nurse's role in palliative care: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *J Clin Nurs*. 2018; 27: e21–e38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.13912>

^v Papanthanasou IV, Fradelos EC, Kleisiaris CF, Tsaras K, Kalota MA, Kourkouta L. Motivation, leadership, empowerment and confidence: their relationship with nurses' burnout. *Mater Sociomed*. 2014 Dec;26(6):405-10. doi: 10.5455/msm.2014.26.405-410. Epub 2014 Dec 14.

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