

Sigma's VIRTUAL 31st International Nursing Research Congress (Wednesday, 22 July - Friday, 24 July)

## Baccalaureate Nurses' Experiences and Understanding of Adults Living With Sickle Cell Disease

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**Background:** Sickle cell disease (SCD) is a chronic, genetic blood disorder with most treatment interventions geared toward the acute phase of the disease, which often leads to fragmented care. In Canada, the teaching of SCD occurs without a genetic competency, which showed the gap between the nursing curricula and the advancement of genomic medicine, resulting in miscommunication, misunderstanding, and inadequate nursing care. Many studies have reported insufficient attention in the emergency department, such as delayed waiting time for pain medication and health care providers' negative attitudes toward patients living with SCD (Freiermuth et al., 2014; Jenerette, Pierre-Louis, Matthie, & Girardeau, 2015; O'Connor et al., 2014). Donnelly, Nersesian, Foronda, Jones, and Belcher (2017) found that nursing professors lacked the knowledge to teach genetics and genomics content. Therefore, examining baccalaureate nurses' experiences and their understanding of working with adults living with SCD is congruent with the National League for Nursing (2016) educational research priorities that advocate for the use of evidence-based research to transform nursing education and practice.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study was to understand and interpret baccalaureate nurses' experiences of working with adults living with SCD. The investigator examined baccalaureate nurses' experiences and their understanding of working with SCD patients to know the level of the preparedness of baccalaureate nurses who provide care for this population.

**Methods:** A semi-structured interview guide was used to explore baccalaureate nurses' experiences and understanding of working with adults living with SCD. Lindseth and Norbergs' (2004) interpretation of Ricoeur's hermeneutic interpretative phenomenological approach was used to analyze, interpret, and report the research findings. Twelve semi-structured interviews generated four themes and subthemes within the hermeneutic circle for interpretation.

**Results:** The four major themes identified were experiences with SCD, baccalaureate nursing curriculum, nursing interventions, and patient education. The themes were further associated with inadequate educational preparedness. The findings of the dissertation study are crucial to nursing education because inadequate educational preparedness negatively affects nurses' perceptions, nursing interventions, and patient education.

**Conclusion:** The research findings provide an in-depth understanding of baccalaureate nurses' experiences and understanding of working with this vulnerable population. Canadian nursing standards must start to reflect the advances made in genomic medicine to provide quality care for patients living with SCD. Further, examining baccalaureate nurses' experiences and understanding offered personal insights that could facilitate changes in the curricula and practice settings that include care based on genetic variations.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

baccalaureate nurses, experiences and understanding and sickle cell disease

**Abstract Summary:**

This abstract describes a phenomenological, hermeneutical, dissertation study, which offered an in-depth understanding of baccalaureate nurses' experiences and understanding of working with adults living with sickle cell disease. Baccalaureate nurses' experiences and understanding offered new insights to foster curricula change in nursing education, practice settings, and public policy.

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Shelia Reid worked for many years as a staff nurse in medical, surgical, and emergency departments with adults living with sickle cell disease. Last 13 years, she worked as a professor at Sheridan College in the practical nursing and pre-health pathway programs. Over this period, her personal experiences led to the reflection of her practice, assumptions, knowledge, and biases regarding sickle cell disease to formulate the research question for this dissertation study.