

Institution: University of South Wales		
Unit of Assessment: 3. Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy		
Title of case study: Preparing nurses and other healthcare staff for spiritual care nationally and internationally		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2006 to 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Linda Ross (nee Waugh)	Professor of Nursing (spirituality)	1998 to date
Josephine Attard	USW PhD student	2011-2015
Maggie Kirk	Professor	1996-2018
Keith Weeks	Professor	2004-2018
Jackie Miles (nee Austin)	Visiting Professor	1999 to date
Paul Jarvis	Lecturer statistics	2006 to date
Sara Pickett	Research Assistant	17/02/2014 - 31/12/2014
Carmel Downes	Research Assistant	24/04/10 to 05/10/12
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Spiritual care is an important part of holistic person-centred care but has been neglected within nurse/midwifery undergraduate education, despite statutory requirements for nurses/midwives to demonstrate competency. For over more than a decade, University of South Wales' (USW) ground-breaking research has identified important new knowledge on how to prepare and assess undergraduate nurses/midwives for spiritual care. Collaboratively we pioneered the first spiritual care competency (SCC) standard, identified what helps students learn and reached consensus on how spirituality and spiritual care are defined for nurse/midwifery education across Europe. This research has changed and enhanced education, policy, and practice of nursing and other health care professions in Wales, England/UK and Europe. For example, pre-registration nursing curricula at 23 universities across 16 countries has been enhanced. This research is raising awareness of the importance of spiritual care for the nursing/midwifery professions globally.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the regulatory body for nursing and midwifery professions in the UK. In its 2018 'Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses' they set out its expectations that nurses will be able to assess peoples spiritual needs and include that information in care planning and delivery (p13). Professor Linda Ross's previous work was the first in Europe to identify that nurses felt unprepared for spiritual care and wanted more education, and that education programmes contained little overt content. She was one of the first UK nurses to identify that spiritual care needs were important to patients but were largely overlooked. Two decades later, little had changed: 1) no evidence based spiritual care competency (SCC) standard existed setting out the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of nursing students 2) little was known about what or how students should be taught, or what factors contributed to learning 3) confusion persisted about the meaning of spirituality and spiritual care 4) little was known about the impact on patients of nurses providing spiritual care.</p> <p>A novel programme of research at USW spanning 14 years, led by Ross and supported by funding in excess of £350k, has been instrumental in addressing these gaps as follows:</p>		
Reaching consensus on definitions, Developing a spiritual care competency standard & Identifying factors contributing to student learning		
<p><u>Study 1:</u> From 2011 to 2015, Ross wrote the protocol and was Director of Studies for a PhD conducted by Attard supervised by Kirk and Weeks. The study developed the first SCC Framework for student nurses/midwives informed by international evidence, stakeholders and spiritual care experts [R1, R2].</p>		

Impact case study (REF3)

Study 2: Concurrently, a cross sectional pilot study (2010-2011) of 531 pre-registration nursing/midwifery students from six universities in four countries identified important new evidence; students' personal spirituality and how they define spirituality are key factors contributing to self-assessed SCC. The study was led by **Ross** with input from four other nurse researchers who formed the European Spirituality Research Network for Nursing & Midwifery (ESRN), and was supported by other USW researchers [R3].

Study 3: This work confirmed Study 2's findings in the first multinational longitudinal prospective study (2011-2015) commencing with 2193 students from 21 universities in eight countries led by USW researchers in collaboration with ESRN [R4]. Other important findings were that SCC develops over time which students attributed to caring for patients, personal life events and teaching/discussion. Even students with low SCC scores improved.

Study 4: A strong longstanding partnership between **Ross** & Prof. W McSherry (Staffordshire University) resulted in them co-leading the writing of a successful innovative bid, in collaboration with members of ESRN and Kleiven, for Erasmus+ K2 funding (€242,093) to establish best practice in spiritual care education across Europe. This bid built directly upon USW led research (studies 1-3). The EPICC Project (2016-2019), the first of its kind in the world, was about 'Enhancing Nurses and Midwives Competence in Providing Spiritual Care Through Innovative Education and Compassionate Care'. 31 nurse/midwifery educators from 21 European countries and over 60 stakeholders (representing government e.g. Welsh Government, professional bodies e.g. Royal College of Nursing, students, practitioners, patients) co-produced six important novel outputs:

- 1) Agreed definitions of 'spirituality' and 'spiritual care' for nurse/midwifery education
- 2) Four core spiritual care competencies ('**Spiritual Care Education Standard**') from Study 1
- 3) **Gold Standard Matrix for Spiritual Care Education** outlining factors helping/hindering SCC development identified from studies 2 and 3
- 4) **Toolkit** with activities to support teaching and learning
- 5) **Network** and 6) **Website** for sharing best practice [R5]

Measuring impact on patient care

Studies 5 & 6: To test the impact of the teaching/learning principles from Studies 1-3 on patient care, USW researchers trained eight volunteers in one Welsh Health Board in 2014-16 to deliver spiritual care [R6] previously called for by 16 advanced heart failure (AHF) patients [R7]. Spiritual care was highly valued by the 20 AHF patients randomised to receive it [R6].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1. Attard, J., **Ross**, L. Weeks, K. (2019) Developing a spiritual care competency framework for pre-registration nurses and midwives. *Nurse Education in Practice*. 40 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.07.010>. (Study 1)

R2. Attard, J., **Ross**, L. Weeks, K. (2019) Design and development of a spiritual care competency framework for pre-registration nurses and midwives: a modified Delphi study. *Nurse Education in Practice* doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.08.003>. (Study 1)

R3. **Ross** L, Giske T, van Leeuwen R, Baldacchino D, McSherry W, Narayanasamy A, Jarvis P, Schep-Akkerman A. (2016) Factors contributing to student nurses'/midwives' perceived competency in spiritual care. *Nurse Education Today*, 36, 445-451. (Study 2)

R4. **Ross** L, McSherry W, Giske T, van Leeuwen R, Schep-Akkerman A, Koslander T, Hall J, Østergaard Steinfeldt V, Jarvis P (2018) Nursing and midwifery students' perceptions of spirituality, spiritual care, and spiritual care competency: a prospective, longitudinal, correlational European study. *Nurse Education Today*, 67, 64-71. (Study 3)

R5. van Leeuwen R, Attard J, **Ross** L, Boughey A, Giske T, Kleiven T, McSherry W (2020) The development of a European consensus based Standard in spiritual care competencies for undergraduate nurses and midwives. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. DOI: 10.1111/jan.14613 (Study 4)

R6. Miles J, **Ross** L, Jarvis P, Pickett S. (2020) Spiritual support in advanced heart failure: a randomised controlled feasibility study. *Journal of Health and Social Care Chaplaincy*. DOI: 10.1558/hsc.41171 (Study 5)

R7. **Ross** L and Austin J (2015) Spiritual needs and spiritual support preferences of people with end stage heart failure and their carers: implications for nurse managers. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 23, 1, 87-95 (Study 6)

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The main pathway to impact of our ground-breaking research has been through the [EPICC Project](#). EPICC's strong co-production ethos and inclusion of stakeholders from the outset has ensured early adoption and uptake of its six novel outputs for promoting best practice in nurse/midwifery spiritual care education across Europe. EPICC has achieved the following significant impacts in just **18 months** through participant engagement and dissemination at 67 events across 14 countries.

EPICC has changed and enhanced pre-registration nurse education across Wales

The Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) and the Minister for Health and Social Services for Wales endorsed and formally launched the EPICC outputs at a two day international conference hosted by USW in Cardiff, 1-2 July 2019 [S2] attended by 146 delegates (educators, clinicians, students, general public, policy makers, politicians) from 14 countries [5,p5]. In his opening speech, the Minister shared his vision for Wales to become the first compassionate country and he acknowledged EPICC is a step in that direction [S2]. The Welsh CNO went on to confirm EPICC has had 'a major impact on implementation of the [Health & Care] Standards (2015)' [S2] as follows:

1. The EPICC Standard has been embedded within pre-registration nursing curricula in all six universities (Swansea, South Wales, Glyndwr, Bangor, Cardiff, Open University) [S2]. In 2020 it was used to assess the SCC of 1987 nursing students (up to 18 times per student over three years) through the 'All Wales Practice Assessment Document' [S3].
2. From 2019 the EPICC outputs are helping to prepare over 3800 student assessors (over 2800 Practice Assessors/Supervisors, 1000 Practice Facilitators, 33 Practice Educator Facilitators) by:
 - i) setting out the competencies they should be looking for in the 'Practice Supervisor/Practice Assessor Guide Part 2' [S3] underpinned by EPICC's evidence [S3, 'useful links'].
 - ii) answering important questions: 'What is meant by spirituality?', 'How can I assess if the student is competent in spiritual care?', and providing an example of spiritual care [S3, FAQs] using the 2Q-SAM, a tool in the EPICC Toolkit developed by **Ross** (based on her PhD) and a colleague in 2018 to help nurses to provide spiritual care [S4]. The two questions 'What's most important to you' and 'How can we help' focus care on what is most important to the person (part of spirituality).

Additionally, the Director of Nursing at Health Education & Improvement Wales (HEIW), the body responsible for education of the Welsh healthcare workforce, confirmed in 2019 that: "*Here in Wales, we believe it's important to embed EPICC's Spiritual Care Education Standard into the curriculum.....anyone studying on our nursing programmes will need todemonstrate the need to respect the spirituality of individuals*" [S1].

EPICC has changed and enhanced pre-registration nurse education in Europe

EPICC has changed nursing curricula in 23 universities and teaching in 26 universities in 16 countries [S5, p2-3]. For example, the content and delivery of undergraduate nursing curricula changed in nine universities in nine countries who adopted EPICC's Standard/Matrix/Toolkit. Between 2017-2020 over 4300 nursing/midwifery students were better prepared for spiritual care:

- 200 at the WHO Collaborating Centre, Paracelsus Medical Private University, Salzburg, **Austria**
- 2103 at Viaa Christian University of Applied Sciences, **Netherlands** (using Dutch version of the Standard)
- 500 at the Medical University of Lublin **Poland** (using Polish version of the Standard)
- 600 at VID Specialised University **Norway** (using Norwegian version of the Standard)
- 559 at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) **Ireland**
- 60 at the University of **Malta** making the birth experience of 4000 women more person centred since 2019 [S5, p8-14 for all of the above].
- 369 at the University of Alicante **Spain** [S10]

Additionally, 720 nursing, psychology and occupational therapy students have been better prepared at the University of Huddersfield, **England** [S5, p9-10]. In **Portugal** a Professor from the University of Porto, notes since 2019 the EPICC Standard/Matrix has helped students better evaluate patient needs....and 'promote comfort, adherence to treatment, delay memory decline in

people with dementia, help people and caregivers in palliative care' [S5, p14]. At Maribor University **Slovenia** students have become aware of spiritual care for the first time [S5, p14-15].

EPICC has influenced the education and practice of the existing healthcare workforce in Wales, the UK and Europe:

1) By supporting the practice of organ donation teams. The South **Wales** Organ Donation Team (one of 12 teams in the UK) made up of 12 Specialist Nurses in Organ Donation (SNOD) (from 250 in the UK) have been routinely using the 2Q-SAM since July 2019 to help with extremely challenging conversations around end of life, including organ donation. One of their Specialist Requesters (SR) has confirmed that: *"The team routinely uses the 2Q-SAM to support conversations with families and loved ones in making appropriate decisions within end of life care which could potentially involve organ donation"* [S5, p16-17]. The 2Q-SAM is supporting the practice of all 250 SNODs and SRs in the **UK** through the 2020 NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) advanced communication guide [S6].

2) By supporting the education of organ donation teams. The 2Q-SAM 'went down a storm' in training around 30 SNODs in **England** in 2019. According to the Head of Education & Professional Development at NHSBT the two questions 'What matters to you? and How can we help? brilliantly demonstrated by the SR at the South Wales Organ Donation Team sensitively asking about the patient...helping to build a positive relationship with the family' [S5, p17]. The impact of this work is further demonstrated by an anonymous comment on the Yammer site feed following the training: *"The 2 questions were evaluated by the actors, students and Education Team as some of the most powerful language they had ever seen"* [S5, p17]. The questions in the Tool 'build relationship' and are 'powerful' because they focus care on what is most important to the family at any point in time, inviting them to voice their most pressing need(s).

3) By changing the content and delivery of post-registration education programmes to include the EPICC Standard/Matrix/Toolkit between 2018-2020, a number of practitioners in various universities in Europe became better prepared for spiritual care. This includes 30 nurses at Paracelsus University, **Austria**, 180 advanced practitioners and social workers at Huddersfield University, **England**, 42 nurses at TCD **Ireland**, and 177 nurses and specialist spiritual care givers at Viaa University **Netherlands** plus additional practitioners at healthcare institutes across the **Netherlands** enrolled on Viaa's E-learning programmes [S5, p8-13].

EPICC has changed policy relating to the education and practice of healthcare professions beyond nursing in Wales, England and Europe

1) In **Wales** in 2019 the EPICC Standard became a mandatory requirement of the new HEIW commissioned pre-registration contracts for **midwifery** (starting 2021 with 160 students) and **allied health** (starting 2022 with 892 students from paramedicine, dietetics, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, podiatry, diagnostic radiography and therapeutic radiotherapy and oncology, operating department practitioners, physicians associates healthcare science) [S2].

2) Through an EPICC participant's work with the European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC), its White Paper (2019) [7] for the education of **multidisciplinary palliative care practitioners** working with 7068 palliative care providers in 51/54 countries in **Europe** [S5, p8], promotes the 2Q-SAM (EPICC Toolkit) as 'a really effective tool enabling people to provide spiritual care'.

3) Policy documents for the North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM), **England** (2019) and the **UK** Board of Healthcare Chaplains (UKBHCC, 2020) use the EPICC Standard to set out the practice expected of **non-specialist spiritual care givers**; around 10,000 UHNM staff from 2019 [S8] and 69,853 NMC registrants in Scotland in 2020 [S9]. Representatives from UHNM and UKBHCC were EPICC participants.

4) Through its links with a local university, in March 2020 the Joedy Foundation in **Kenya** adopted the EPICC Standard/Matrix across its health and education programmes. The Foundation, a Non-Profit Organisation, supports the education and holistic health of communities in the war torn Mt Elgon region. As a result 30 **psychotherapists** provided more compassionate counselling to 200 young people, and 400 patients attending malaria/HIV/AIDS medicare camps and 1000 students engaged in the Foundation's education programmes received more holistic pastoral support [S5, p11].

EPICC is raising awareness of the importance of spirituality nationally and internationally:

- 1) "With **Welsh** Government policy officials who are involved in developing policy for patient experience in health and with the Nursing Directorate...officers" (CNO Wales [S2]).
- 2) Within nursing and midwifery globally through its 77 network members across 23 countries including **Brazil, China, Venezuela, USA, Canada** and **Kenya** [Nov 2020] [S5, p18].
- 3) Amongst healthcare professionals in **Poland** where EPICC initiated debate and discussion on spiritual care for the first time in 2017 through the Polish Association for Spiritual Care in Medicine, the only organisation in Poland to promote excellence in holistic care established in 2015 [S5, p13-14].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

S1. [HEIW press release](#)

S2. Testimonial the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales (copy attached)

S3. [HEIW Once for Wales. Realising professionalism: New Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards for education and training](#) which contains the following:

- ['All Wales Practice Assessment Document and Ongoing Record of Achievement for Pre-registration Nursing Programmes'](#) Competencies 1 and 2 are assessed under Professional Attitudes and Behaviours p28. Competencies 3 and 4 are assessed under Assessment Criteria Part 1 (p 50, 53), Part 2 (p80, 84), Part 3 (p112, 116).
- [Practice Supervisor/ Practice Assessor Guide Part 2 NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment \(2018\)](#) p42.
- ['Useful links'](#) (scroll to bottom of page) signposts to EPICC evidence on EPICC website: www.epicc-network.org
- ['FAQs concerning implementation of new Nursing and Midwifery Council Standards for education and training \(2018\)'](#) p21-22

S4. 2 Question Spiritual Assessment Model (2Q-SAM).

- i) [Model](#) and [student exercise](#) on the EPICC website www.epicc-network.org
- ii) Publication outlining how to apply the model in practice: **Ross L, McSherry W** (2018). Two questions that ensure person-centred spiritual care. Nursing Standard [Internet]. Available from: <https://rcni.com/nursing-standard/features/two-questions-ensure-person-centred-spiritual-care-137261>

S5. [Use and value of the EPICC outputs](#): evaluation including results of two participant and stakeholder surveys (April 2019, July 2020) and examples of use of project outputs and participation.

S6. NHS Blood and Transplant (2020) Advanced Communication Guide Specialist Nurses in Organ and Tissue Donation. NHS Blood and Transplant, p13 (copy attached)

S7. Best, M, Leget, C, Goodhead, A, Paal P (2020) An EAPC white paper on multi-disciplinary education for spiritual care in palliative care. BMC Palliative Care, 19:9 pp5 <https://bmcpalliatcare.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12904-019-0508-4>

S8. University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust C47 Spiritual Care Policy. March 2019 pp 6, 9, 15 (Appendix) (copy attached)

S9. [UK Board of Healthcare Chaplains \(2020\). Spiritual Care Competences for Healthcare Chaplains \(2020\). UKBHC and NHS Education Scotland](#) p33

S10. Fernández-Pascual M, Reig-Ferrer A and Santos-Ruiz A (2020) Effectiveness of an Educational Intervention to Teach Spiritual Care to Spanish Nursing Students. Religions. 11, 596; doi:10.3390/rel11110596