

# Scratching the surface – Person-centred knowledge morally and professionally commits nurses

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## Introduction

Within the person-centred framework, Guided self-determination is a method that supports reflection, collaboration, personal decision-making and problem solving.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to:

1. Examine clinical nurses' experience of facilitating Guided self-determination during radiation or outpatient chemotherapy treatment.
2. Examine the ward managers' motivation for implementing Guided self-determination in their departments and their expectations of impact.

## Method

Qualitative Interview study using a phenomenological hermeneutic approach.

Five nurses and their ward managers' were interviewed using individual semi structured- and focus group interviews. All five nurses had completed a Guided self-determination certification course.

Analyses were conducted using thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke's six-phases.

| VISUALIZING THE PROCESS FROM FINDING INITIAL CODES TO DEFINING SUBTHEME AND OVERALL THEMES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Initial codes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Subthemes                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Overall theme                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal satisfaction from patient feedback.</li> <li>Patient empowerment, a new basis for cooperation.</li> <li>Reflection on professional competences, wishing to work more person-centred.</li> <li>Patient trajectories and nurses obligation to support them.</li> <li>Nurses professional competences and wishing to include the whole person.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaningful to nurses</li> <li>Meaningful to ward managers</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSD being meaningful to nurses, ward managers and patients</li> </ul>                                                                                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legitimate to be professional available and engage authentically in the GSD conversation room.</li> <li>Close relationship.</li> <li>Hard to navigate between the two rooms/difficult to reconcile the two rooms.</li> <li>Refrain from inviting patients to a deeper conversation during ordinary treatment consultations.</li> <li>Rejection when in the treatment room – turning away.</li> <li>Changed and trusted relation to the patient created a dilemma in relation to time.</li> <li>Incompatibility between the treatment task and the time allotted in both the radiation therapy department and outpatient clinic.</li> <li>Not treating my GSD patients.</li> <li>Needed a free space, suffocation if not.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Framing the GSD conversations</li> <li>GSD conversations creates a dilemma in relation to limited time during tightly scheduled treatment</li> <li>A physical room for GSD</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSD creates an extraordinary room for counselling but caused moral distress because it was incompatible with short-term clinical practice</li> </ul> |

## Perspectives

To prevent ethical dilemmas causing nurses' moral distress, future implementation of GSD in must be consciously planned involving reflection, individual supervision on experienced challenges and dilemmas along with organizational support.

.....professionally, I feel privileged being allowed to spend time with patients, time that otherwise does not exists. Being able to establish...."the relation" is a fantastic experience; because this is what nurses do (.....)

Exactly, what about the rest of the whole person? We have very little time but nevertheless, we can do a lot during our contact with the patient

I think there are two different "rooms" and this patient found it very difficult...because it may be difficult knowing how we talk with each other during treatments, where there are more people in the same room, compared to when we are just the two of us

You become close [with the patients] and the art is to be close but not bring them home with you after work, but sometimes it is hard. You are concerned about them, and you can't just put them aside when you go home

To one of my GSD patients, I turned away not showing, not presenting myself to the patient, not welcoming the patient. Well, there is only 10 minutes calculated to her treatment and she would expect so much more from our conversation. And, then I chose the easy solution

## Findings

Two overall themes were generated

**"GSD is meaningful to both clinical nurses, ward managers and patients"**

and

**"GSD creates an extraordinary room for counselling incompatible with clinical practice in a short-term contact but causing moral distress".**

## Conclusion

All nurses experienced the Guided self-determination intervention to be meaningful, person-centred and of value but difficult to implement in a busy technical field. To the clinical nurses this created a dilemma in everyday practice when they had to treat their Guided self-determination patients with the risk of causing moral distress. The nurses used different strategies to cope with this.

The ward managers emphasized the importance of GSD in this setting where information and accelerated treatment is in focus. By supporting the patients during treatment, they would potentially be better prepared to live with cancer. The ward managers also expected the GSD conversations to develop the nurses' professional competencies.

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