

## **Research Report – October 2008**

### **RMOL893: “The experience of women with chronic illness aged between 65 to 74 years: A qualitative participatory study”.**

#### **Investigators:**

Dr Dianne Roy  
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Associate Professor Lynne Giddings  
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#### **Recruitment:**

Recruitment commenced following approval from UREC (2 May 2007 – 31 October 2008). This process took a little longer than anticipated, often due to schedules of those people acting as intermediaries in the process.

After an adequate sample size (9) had been recruited the first focus group was re-scheduled to 16<sup>th</sup> June 07.

#### **Data Collection:**

Data collection complete. Three focus groups have been completed (16<sup>th</sup> June 2007, 4<sup>th</sup> August 2007 and 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008). Additionally, face-to-face individual interviews have also been completed.

#### **Data analysis:**

Second phase analysis and writing has been completed following the third focus group. Third phase analysis/interpretation and conceptual analysis is underway.

#### **Progress:**

Due to unforeseen health issues for one of the investigators in this collaborative study we are behind our projected time schedule. Given this, we are pleased with progress to date but anticipate that the submission date for our article to be early in the New Year. We have, however, had an abstract accepted for an oral presentation (Dr Dianne Roy) at the “Fourth Pan-Pacific Nursing Conference & The Sixth Hong Kong Nursing Symposium on Cancer Care” 13-15 November 2008, Hong Kong. This presentation will draw on one aspect of findings from phase one of the study as situated alongside emerging analysis from phase two (see attached abstract).

#### **Outputs anticipated:**

- Oral presentation by Dianne Roy at the “Fourth Pan-Pacific Nursing Conference & The Sixth Hong Kong Nursing Symposium on Cancer Care”, 13-15 November 2008, Hong Kong.
- Manuscript to be submitted to *Journal of Advanced Nursing* as a follow-up to the previous publication (Giddings, Roy, & Predeger, 2007).
- Presentations at women’s health and rehabilitation conferences. For example:
  - Royal College of Nurses International Nursing Research Conference 2010

- Presentations to consumer groups. E.g. Arthritis New Zealand, Multiple Sclerosis Society and Parkinson's New Zealand.

Dr Dianne Roy  
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October 14<sup>th</sup> 2008

*Reference:*

Giddings, L. S., Roy, D. E., & Predeger, E. (2007). Women's experience of ageing with a chronic condition. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 58 (6), 557-565.  
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Appendix One: Abstract for Hong Kong conference.

**Fourth Pan-Pacific Nursing Conference & The Sixth Hong Kong Nursing Symposium on Cancer Care 13-15 November 2008, Hong Kong**

**Authors:** Dr Dianne Roy and Associate Professor Lynne Giddings

**Presenter: Dr Dianne Roy**

**Abstract:** Women's experience of aging with a chronic condition: Staying alert for the 'double-whammy'

**Purpose of the study:**

The aim of this collaborative project was to explore women's experiences of aging with a chronic condition.

**Methods:**

The first phase of this qualitative study involved seven women aged between 50 and 58 years living with a chronic condition. Data from a series of focus groups (x3) were analysed using the method of Thorne's et al. (1997, 2004) interpretive description.

**Results:**

The experience of living with a chronic condition foreshadowed what was to come with ageing and embodied the ageing process: it was just part of their lives. Alongside this, the women now felt less out of place. Their peers were catching up and beginning to experience aspects of participants' everyday reality. The women, however, experienced a 'double-whammy' when ageing amplified the ongoing vulnerabilities of living with a chronic condition. This presentation focuses primarily on the theme of the 'double-whammy', the impact on quality of life and implications for nursing practice.

**Conclusions:**

Strategies developed to deal with the everyday reality of living with a chronic condition, can enable women to incorporate in a 'matter-of-fact' way many of the processes associated with aging. Changing social networks, general aches and pains, and decreasing agility, for example, become 'just another thing to contend with'. Skills, often associated with being an older woman, such as negotiating the health care system, are already perfected. Women aging with a chronic condition, however, are vulnerable to experiencing 'a double-whammy' when the processes of their chronic condition and the processes of aging come together. Nurses who recognize

the resourcefulness and expertise of women who live with a chronic condition can effectively be co-strategists in their helping them to age well.