

ABSTRACT

Birth of a Profession: A Narrative Inquiry into the Shaping of New Zealand Midwifery

Erin Hanlon

Keywords: Narrative Inquiry, midwifery, The Nurses Amendment Act, research ethics, health reform

The intention of this presentation is to showcase the Narrative Inquiry methodology which has been used to explore the experiences of midwives who have worked in New Zealand since the 1990 when the contemporary maternity model was implemented. In-depth interviews took place across Aotearoa with 16 midwives and 5 consumers. Narrative Inquiry methodology has been utilised to perform interviews, transcribe and analyse data. Participants shared their narratives of working clinically, in education, and within governance of the midwifery profession, and shared their narratives around how the profession of midwifery has evolved throughout the years. Using a framework sourced from Connelly & Clandinin (2006), this study references the concepts of temporality (time), place (location) and sociality (social conditions within New Zealand) in the analysis. Within narrative inquiry, temporality utilises timepoints such as past, present and future to situate a story within the context of when events occurred with the vantage point of hindsight (Kim, 2015) to inform future events. These collated narratives capture historical perspectives of local midwifery over time, highlighting a shift in birthing culture which has led to changes in practice and how the profession has responded. Additionally, this korero will touch on how the ethical challenges were surmounted as the researcher proposed to directly contact participants and identify their names in the final write up.

References

- Connelly F. M., & Clandinin, D.J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2–14. doi: 10.3102/0013189X019005002
- Connelly F. M., & Clandinin, D.J. (2006). Narrative inquiry. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (3rd ed., pp. 477–87). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kim, J. H. (2015). *Understanding narrative inquiry: The crafting and analysis of stories as research*. SAGE Publications, Inc.