

Revista de Enfermería del Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social Is crossing the border

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It is a great honor to have been invited to join the editorial board, and specially to have been invited to write a editorial for *Revista de Enfermería del Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social* (IMSS). We congratulate the leadership of the IMSS for supporting the journal and investing in Mexican nurses. We are confident that this journal will have a tremendous and positive impact on the development of nursing research and nursing practice in Mexico.

We have been most fortunate to have many of you at the 1997 workshop sponsored by the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Facultad de Enfermería in Monterrey and at the 5th meeting of nursing research of the IMSS in Oaxtepec during 1998. We are very impressed by the leadership roles taken by many Mexican nurses, the incredible contributions Mexican nurses already have made to the well-being of Mexican citizens, the commitment of all Mexican nurses to improve the health of Mexican citizens, and the collective vision for nursing in Mexico's future. We look forward to learning from you and with you as you report your work in this renew journal.

We commend you for your ongoing efforts to build a theory-guided research base for nursing practice. As you may already realize, nursing theory and nursing research are the two strands of a double helix that are meaningful for nursing practice only when intertwined. Thus, theory without research may be interesting but is lacking in the empirical evidence that supports its use as a way to improve practice. And research without theory is no better trial and error problem solving.

Several nursing theories have been developed by nurses in the United States and already are being used to guide nursing research and nursing practice in Mexico. As you consider different nursing theories as guides for your research and practice, we urge you to consider the following points:

First, we encourage you to determine the applicability of each nursing theory in your particular situation. Nursing theories do not represent "the truth". Rather, each theory represents one nurse's vision of the person who requires nursing the environment, the health state of the person who requires nursing, and nursing actions taken on behalf of or in conjunction with the person who requires nursing. The applicability of each nursing theory is influenced by clinical situations and clinical settings, the culture of the person requiring, the culture of the nurse who is doing the research or practice. Thus, not all nursing theories developed by nurses in the United States may be applicable in Mexico. You may determine the applicability of a nursing theory by examining its fit with your own vision of nursing. Ask yourself and the nurses with whom you work: What is health? What is nursing? Who are the people who require nursing? What are the goals of nursing research and nursing practice? In what clinical situations and clinical settings should nursing research be conducted and nursing practice be carried out? What environmental factors or forces influence the person's health states? If your vision is a "good fit" with an existing nursing theory, then select it to guide your nursing research and practice. If, however, no existing nursing theory, "fits" your vision as a guide.

Second, we encourage you to publish your work in this journal—it is the perfect place for reports of theory-guided nursing research and practice.

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So, publish your vision of nursing. Publish reports of your deliberations about your own vision and its fit or lack of fit with existing nursing theories. Publish reports of your theory-guided research. Publish reports of your theory-guided practice.

The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century are specially important times in the history of nursing. Nurses are needed as never by people throughout the world to attain the goal of "Health for All by 2000" and "Health for All by 2010". We are convinced that Mexican nurses' commitment to theory-guided nursing research and practice is the key to the attainment of those goals. We, in turn, are committed to working with you as you continue your excellent work. The global nursing community will benefit greatly from your efforts. And most important, the citizens of Mexico and the entire world will benefit.