

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO THE EXPERIENCE OF SURVIVING A CARDIAC ARREST

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**A thesis by publication submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing.**

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Health and Medicine,
University of Newcastle

2020

This research was supported by an Australian government Research Training Program
(RTP) Scholarship

Declaration

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that the work embodied in the thesis is my own work, conducted under normal supervision. The thesis contains no material which has been accepted, or is being examined, for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University's Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 and any approved embargo.

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I hereby certify that this thesis is in the form of a series of published papers of which I am a joint author. I have included as part of the thesis a written statement from each co-author, endorsed by the Faculty Assistant Dean (Research Training), attesting to my contribution to the joint publications.

Signed:

Gunilla Haydon

Acknowledgments

It is a big decision to start a PhD and to complete a thesis without support it is an impossible task. To have a group of people supporting you, pushing you when it is needed, console and encourage you when the doubts of your capacity creeps into your mind is more valuable than words can describe.

My first thank you go to Associate Professor Pamela van der Riet. Pamela has been my primary supervisor since I made my first attempt in research as an honour's student exploring the humorous interactions between nurses and patients. Her knowledge in my chosen methodology, narrative inquiry, has helped me understand the finer points of narrative inquiry and the relational aspects that are so important. Together we had some great moments while presenting at conferences such as bushwalking in Banff, Canada, and this was during my honours, exploring Floriade in Canberra during a cold snap when the roads were closed due to snow. It has been a great time together, that has lasted a long time and I hope this is not the end of our collaboration and friendship.

Professor Jane Maguire started the PhD with me and was a great support in the early stages, especially leading and supporting me during the literature search. Thank you, Jane your support is greatly appreciated. Jane left the University of Newcastle and Associate Professor Kerry Inder became my supervisor.

Associate Professor Kerry Inder brought with her a wealth of knowledge and her input made my thesis much stronger. Her knowledge in cardiac illness has indeed made me think more critically and to express it clearly. Kerry has been the person who makes me think really hard about what it is

that I want to have said and that is vital in a thesis. Thank you, Kerry your support and involvement in my PhD candidature has made me a better researcher and writer.

It is not only the people directly involved in the PhD that I am grateful to have around me, my family and friends who has lived with me during this time deserves a mention as well. My family David, Tomas, Natasha and Graeme are the people who has kept me sane and made sure I have taken breaks and engaged with the world around me during this time. They are the people who either had to listen to me or read the outlines of my articles or chapters in the thesis to make sure it ‘made sense’ before I sent it to my supervisors. I owe them a great deal as without them I would not be as happy as I am.

There are also countless of people, albeit fleetingly, who has supported me during this time and although I cannot name them all, they deserve a mention and thank you. Probably the most important people I want to say thank you to are all the participants who so willingly told their story. It was a great experience to engage and listen to their experience of surviving a cardiac arrest and without their participation there would be no thesis.

As this is the last part to be done, it is with great excitement I put the final thank you words together. It has indeed been a long and sometimes arduous time, but in the end a time that has been worth while as these findings can support future survivors of a cardiac arrest. This research endeavour has taught me many skills, I have seen places and met many interesting people and for that I am eternally grateful.

Published articles included in this thesis

The articles are listed in the order of appearance in the thesis.

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Maguire, J. (2017). Survivors' quality of life after cardiopulmonary resuscitation: An integrative review of the literature. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 31, 6–26. doi: 10.1111/scs.12323.

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2017). A systematic review and meta-synthesis of the qualitative literature exploring the experiences and quality of life of survivors of a cardiac arrest. *European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing*, 16(6), 475– 483. doi:10.1177/1474515117705486.

Haydon, G., Browne, G., & van der Riet, P. (2017). Narrative inquiry as a research methodology, exploring person centred care in nursing. *Collegian*, 25(1), 125–129. doi:10.1016/j.colegn.2017.03.001

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2020). A narrative inquiry of survivors' experiences of the time just before and after a cardiac arrest. *Collegian*, 28(2), 190-196. doi:10.1016/j.colegn.2020.06.008

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder K. (2020). The experience of returning home after surviving cardiac arrest: a narrative inquiry. *Nordic Journal of Nursing Research* 40(4), 188-196. doi:10.1177/2057158520932348

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2019). Long-term survivors of cardiac arrest: A narrative inquiry. *European Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing*, 18(6), 458-464. doi:10.1177/1474515119844717

Conference presentations related to this narrative inquiry

Research from this thesis was presented nine times at eight conferences during my period of candidature. The presentation titles are listed below starting with the most recent abstract. A copy of the abstracts and posters associated with these presentations are detailed in Appendix One.

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2020). Using narrative inquiry to explore the experience of surviving a cardiac arrest. *Nordic Conference in Nursing Research "Methods and Networks for the future."* June 2020, Copenhagen, Denmark. Oral presentation

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2019). Nursing Research and Narrative Inquiry a great fit. Qualitative Methods Conference, "Qualitative Methods in a Time of Change" May 2019, Brisbane, Australia. Oral presentation

Haydon, G., van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2019). Cardiac arrest survivors experience immediately before and after the event: A narrative Inquiry. Research week School of Nursing and Midwifery, Newcastle, Australia September 2019 Poster presentation

- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2018). Narrative Inquiry in Nursing Research: Tensions, Bumps, and the Research Puzzle. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17, 1-39. doi:10.1177/1609406918801621 May 2018, Banff, Canada. Oral presentation.
- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Inder, K. (2018). Long term survivors of cardiac arrest: Findings from seven individuals using narrative inquiry. Research week School of Nursing and Midwifery, Newcastle, Australia. September 2018. Poster presentation
- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Maguire, J. (2016). The Suitability for Narrative Inquiry in Health Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17, 1-39. doi:10.1177/1609406916628953 April 2015 Melbourne Australia. Oral presentation.
- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Maguire, J. (2016). Qualitative and Quantitative Research in Quality of Life After Surviving a Cardiac Arrest. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17, 1-39. doi:10.1177/1609406916628953 April 2015 Melbourne Australia. Oral presentation.
- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Maguire, J. (2016). Narrative Inquiry: a suitable method in health research. *Nordic Conference in Nursing Research "Methods and Networks for the future."* June 2016, Stockholm, Sweden. Oral presentation.
- Haydon, G.**, van der Riet, P., & Maguire, J. (2016). Narrative inquiry, a relational research methodology. Asia Pacific International Conference on Qualitative Research in Nursing Midwifery and Health. Newcastle, Australia. October 2014. Poster presentation.

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Signed:

Gunilla Haydon

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Abstract

Cardiac arrest accounts for approximately 20% of deaths in Western societies, although the survival rate is increasing. This leads to the question, or puzzle, of how does post-cardiac arrest survivors' experience life after cardio-pulmonary resuscitation? A cardiac arrest is a catastrophic and tumultuous event for all involved, but little is known of survivors' individual experiences. This thesis aims to provide an original contribution to knowledge about individuals' experiences of surviving a cardiac arrest and includes six articles published in peer reviewed journals.

A modified approach to Connelly and Clandinin's narrative inquiry framework has been used to address my research aim and unpack my research question/puzzle of participants' experiences of surviving a cardiac arrest. Connelly & Clandinin's (1990) narrative inquiry supports the concept that people live "storied lives and tell stories of those lives" (p. 2), where telling and retelling lived experiences creates order and makes meaning of experiences. Stories are collected, studied and narratively described as research findings. In this thesis I analysed my participants' stories through a three-dimensional space/lens involving temporality, place and sociality.

Eligibility in this inquiry required participants to have survived a cardiac arrest, be living independently in the community and fluent in English. Seventeen participants, including four females and 13 males, participated in a semi-structured interview. The participants had a diverse background in education, employment, age, and living conditions, ensuring a broad spectrum of experiences. Meetings were held from November

2016 to June 2017, at a time and place of shared convenience. While narrative inquiry normally has a small numbers of participants, in this inquiry, a larger number of participants expressed interest. All fulfilled the inclusion criteria and participated in an interview, hence a modified adaptation to Connelly and Clandinin's narrative inquiry approach was used.

Findings are presented in three published articles, each focusing on specific time periods: the immediate time before and after the cardiac arrest; the transition from hospital to home; and following long-term survival. The immediate time before the arrest describes an ordinary time changing to an extraordinary event where survivors had no control, entering a liminal space of chaos and confusion. As they returned home their changed reality became confronting. Extra time and effort were needed to complete everyday tasks. Mental (memory loss and thinking capacity) and physical (slowness and fatigue) limitations were daily reminders of their changed reality and future. However, long-term survivors became comfortable in their embodied reality; life had settled. The event remained a vivid memory. The cardiac arrest had altered their life, but they had adapted to their limits and found acceptance in living as a cardiac arrest survivor.

For the survivor, the cardiac arrest is a defining moment where their life changed in a moment from ordinary to an extraordinary and unknown reality. The survivors entered a liminal space of betwixt and between involving a 'before' and 'after' the event. An awareness of liminality may well help healthcare professionals to understand what support survivors of cardiac arrest seek from their illness experience.

Glossary

Cardiac arrest

Cardiac arrest is the abrupt loss of heart function in a person. Cardiac arrest can come on suddenly, or as a flow on effect from other symptoms. A cardiac arrest is often fatal, unless appropriate interventions, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, are commenced immediately (American Heart Association, 2020a).

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is an attempt to restore spontaneous circulation by performing chest compressions with or without ventilations (Jacobs et al., 2004) and is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating (American Heart Association, 2020b).

Embodiment

Embodiment involves experiences that are incorporated into the body and expressed through the body. In health, nurses encounter embodied expressions of pain, discomfort, fear, anxiety, shame and embarrassment among their patients. While attending to their patients care, nurses note the patient's embodied verbal language as well as their body language in order to provide holistic care (Fernandez, 2020).

In hospital cardiac arrest

An in hospital cardiac arrest (IHCA) is a cardiac arrest while in hospital (American Heart Association, 2020).

Health related quality of life

Health-related quality of life (HRQOL) is a person's, or a group of people's perceived physical and mental health measured over time. HRQOL is a means of calculating the way health is observed to affect quality of life (Karimi & Brazier, 2016).

Holistic care

Holistic nursing care refers to the care of patients based on a mutual understanding of their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual dimensions. Holistic nursing care considers and assists the persons and the effects of the illness on their body, mind, spirituality and their personal relationships (Jasemi, Valizadeh, Zamanzadeh & Keogh, 2017).

Implantable cardioverter defibrillator

An Implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) is a battery-powered device placed under the skin that keeps track of the heart rate. Thin wires connect the ICD to the heart. If an abnormal heart rhythm is detected, the device will deliver an electric shock to restore a normal heartbeat (American Heart Association, 2020).

Out of hospital cardiac arrest

An out of hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) is a cardiac arrest while out in the community (American Heart Association, 2020).

Pacemaker

A pacemaker is a small device that is placed in the chest or abdomen to help control abnormal heart rhythms. This device uses electrical pulses to prompt the heart to beat at a normal rate (American Heart Association, 2020).

Person-centred care

Person-centred care is the underpinning of safe, high-quality healthcare. Person-centred care is care that is respectful and responsive to the preferences, needs and values of the person (Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, 2019).

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a condition generated by an experience of a traumatic event that is severe enough to create strong feelings of fear, helplessness, and horror. PTSD can be caused by fragmentary memories from their time spent in intensive care where nightmares and hallucinations, recalled afterwards making it difficult for patients to make sense of what has happened to them. The fragmented memories are often described as vivid, realistic and terrifying (Torres, 2020).

Quality of life

Quality of life (QOL) is a broad multidimensional idea that includes subjective calculations of both positive and negative aspects of life (Jenkinson, 2020).

Return of spontaneous circulation

Signs of the return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) is defined as the restoration of a spontaneous perfusing rhythm that results in more than an occasional gasp, fleeting palpated pulse, or arterial waveform (Jacobs et al., 2004)

Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling may be described as the technique for finding research participants through 'word of mouth' via conversations with other participants (Blackstone, 2012).

Abbreviations

AED	Automated external defibrillator
CA	cardiac arrest
CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
IHCA	in hospital cardiac arrest
OHCA	out of hospital cardiac arrest
RN	registered nurse
ROSC	return of spontaneous circulation