

EDITORIAL

I wish that our nursing research progressed in building blocks, one on top of the other and thereby constructing a sound base. What our research studies - maybe all research seem to do is to pin-point one problem after the other, but the problems do not get built upon or solved. For instance, this issue of CURATIONIS publishes work showing the need for greater dissemination of knowledge in areas such as breast feeding practice and oncological services. Studies published in previous years demonstrate the need for more information and the need to change incorrect beliefs and perceptions. Sadly it is easier to point out deficiencies than to show ways to correct them. Practice, beliefs and perceptions usually are very entrenched for both health workers and their clients, so problems abound.

Poggenpoel and Gmeiner's account, written up in this issue, of the development and putting into practice a support programme for nursing service managers, makes welcome reading. Their programme was developed in response to a real problem that had been identified in a previous survey, and thus makes a true contribution

towards solving as well as pin-pointing problems. I think it was Florence Nightingale who made the wise observation that 'reports are not self-executive'. On thinking further about that remarkable woman, she wrote a number of reports on illness, health, the care of the patient and the problems associated with these but, better than most, managed to get things changed as a result of her observations. She was instrumental in organising nurse training, health visitor education, hospital design - according to hospital architects, the Nightingale ward remains an excellent model - medical care of the British soldier and the statistical record keeping of the British Civil Service.

As a last observation in this rambling editorial, Gwele's appeal on the need for beginning debate on exit standards for diploma and degree programmes in nursing, requires hard thought from us all. If this is to be a topic at the 1996 FUNDISA, such thoughts are urgent!

NOELLE HUNT
Editor