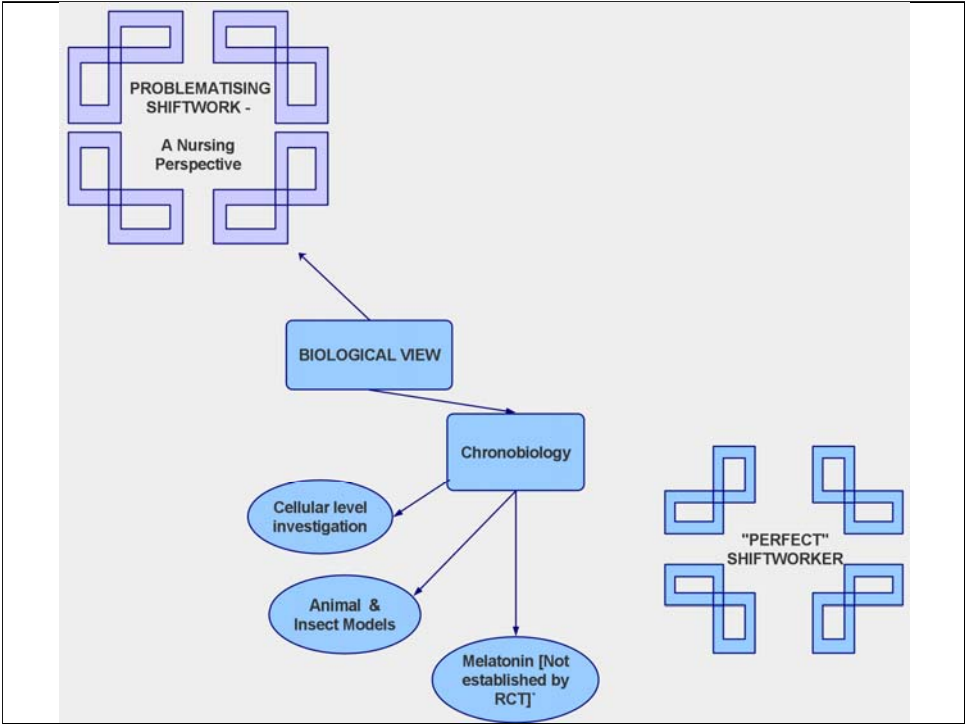
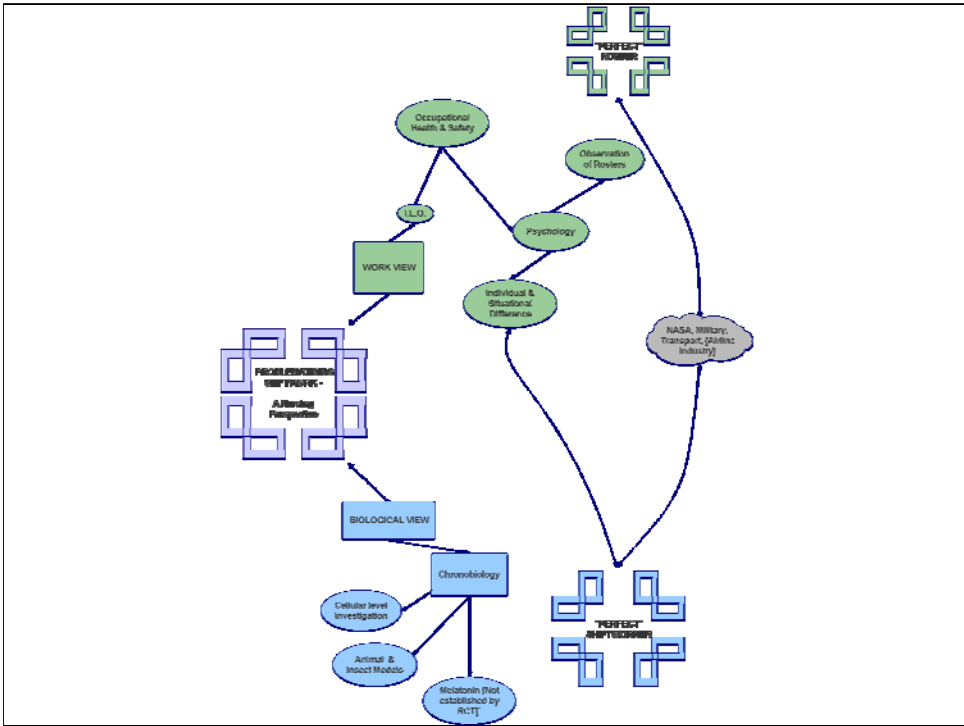
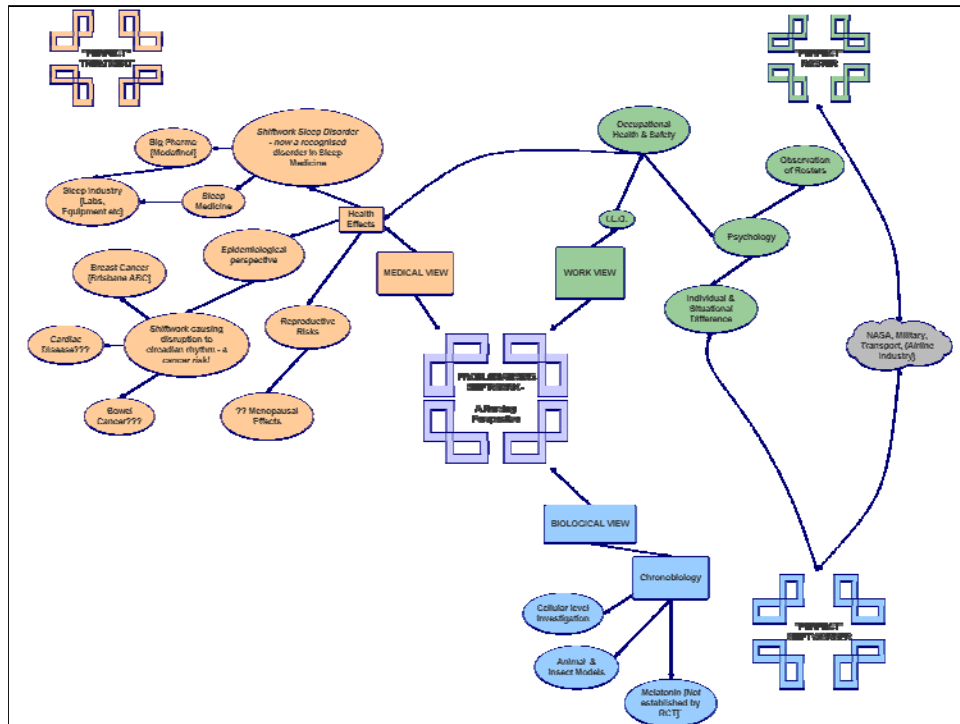
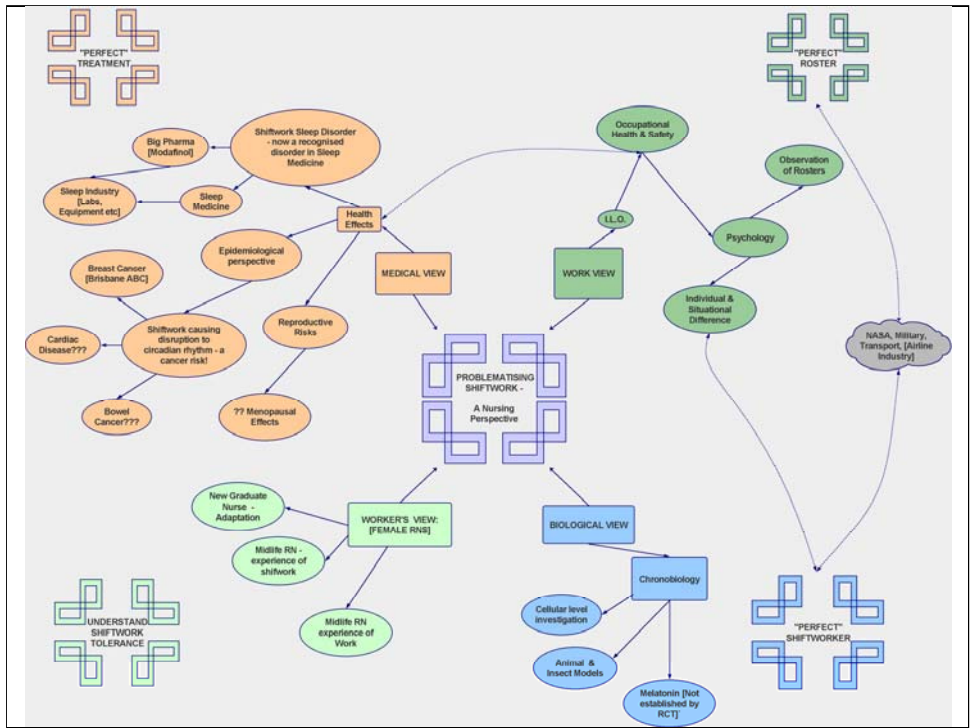


Society & Work in Nursing – Research Group:
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Characteristics of Shiftwork in Nursing

- Rapidly rotating roster
 - All shifts possible in any one fortnight
 - No specified pattern of shift rotation
- Shifts determined through a variety of approaches to “self rostering”
 - Minimal managerial oversight
 - Questionable equity in access to shifts
- Generally a maximum of 4 weeks notice of shifts (often less)
- Maximal flexibility but no regular shift pattern



Study 1 (2007) – Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Aim: To identify & explore phenomena that are assisting mid-life registered nurses to successfully undertake shift work involving rapidly rotating rosters

Participants: n= 13 [5 Urban, 8 Regional]

Age: 45 – 60yrs

Majority: Partnered, 1+ children

Primary carer for older relative



Study 2 (2008) – Mail Survey (7 Tools + Demographics)

Aim: Differentiate the effects of factors established to contribute to shiftwork tolerance for Shiftworking & non-shiftworking RNs

Sample Pop. = 5000) Response Rate 31% n= 1550

Full Time Rotating Shiftworkers: n= 273

700 +ve & 700 –ve responses (all categories)

→ *Analysis of open-ended questions identifying positive and negative aspects of shiftwork*



Analytical Focus:

“making shiftwork work for me” / shiftwork tolerance

- Three main analytical themes emerging:
 - Work/life interaction- enable the women to manage the demands of paid work and familial responsibilities
 - Use of shiftwork to manage their physical health & mental well-being
 - 1) Mental/Emotional/Political load of the workplace (placing limits on managerial influence & making space for nursing practice)
 - 2) Physical demands of practice
 - Embodied work- manage their own bodies

This presentation will focus on the first 2

Important to note that within these themes the women talked about both negative and positive aspects. We choose to centre the positive aspects for 3 main reasons:

- 1) they come out often enough in our data for us to ignore them
- 2) current literature centres only the “problem” of shiftwork
- 3) analyses of the positive aspects expose the shortfalls within current problematisations of shiftwork



Mental/Emotional/Political load of the workplace

- Study 2 data: Choose to work evening/night shift as :
 - there are no management staff on duty
 - they spend less time filling in patient paperwork
 - have more time on direct patient care
- Excerpt Study 1:

"The work on night duty in some ways is more rewarding because you're...you're really just dealing with the medical, the patient's care. You're not chasing charts, there's a lot I'd say about, I'd say about 45% of your time in the day shift is spent on chasing paperwork which you don't have on night duty" (MLS003RN)



Physical Demands of Practice

- Work shifts that they know they will be able to manage physically eg. morning shift would be the most physical because that is when the lifting of patients for bathing, bed-making, mobilisation of patients
- Study 2 data:
 - If can work afternoon better health-wise
 - Suitable for my back injury;
 - My body wouldn't last at all on day shift nursing

- Excerpt Study 1:

"We don't do a lot of lifting anymore [on evenings] which I keep using as my excuse as to why I don't want to day work because up and down in the showers used to kill my backI can't physically shower people because it just used to hurt me too much.....I used to have to go and lay on the floor after I had done it [MLS0004]"



Embodied Work

- The work that women do managing their own labouring bodies - Dellinger and Citeroni (2000)
- The clinical practice of nursing makes physical demands on nurses' bodies, BUT shiftwork provides some space/time for the women to care for their own bodies
- Participants report engagement in various acts of self care:
 - *time alone*- simply time to oneself
 - *unpaid body work*- activities that help them relax: e.g. Gardening/Reading
 - *paid body work/ maintenance*: e.g. Going to gym, yoga classes

Significant finding from both studies: the link between shiftwork and women's ability to invest labour in themselves (Dellinger and Citeroni, 2000)

We found that the significance of shiftwork for women's embodied work is that it facilitates absence of other bodies to care for, so women can engage various acts of their own body care:

- 1) it affords them the time to go out and pay someone else to perform/ or assist in the care of their bodies
- 2) giving them the time and space to perform their own self care



Time Alone

- Women did not necessarily do anything in this time, they enjoyed being on their own
- Study 2 Data:
 - 173 response coded to “use of personal time”
54 negative aspects / 119 positive aspect
 - 53 positive 3 negative re “time alone”
- Excerpt Study 1:

“I love working night duty because I get the house to myself. You know I get my time much more than I would get if I worked 9 to 5..... Night duty allows me to be the me who I think I am. ... I love the extra time that we have and I think that’s yeah that’s my saving grace, a stabilising factor, the bit that let’s me normal”. [MLS004RN]



Unpaid Body Work

- These are activities
 - done by the women themselves on their own bodies, in the home,
 - that the women perceive as something that helps them relax and recover from the demand of their paid work.
- Study 2 Data:
 - physical activities (e.g gardening)
 - might include mental activities (e.g. reading a book)
- Excerpt Study 1:

"I like to do a bit of gardening so I get that sort of stuff out of the way first and then I will come to work and do my work"
[MLS009RN]



Paid Body Work/ Maintenance

- Study 2 data:
 - 17 positive re attending exercise needs/classes etc
 - 10 negative (focus on regular sports involvement)
- Excerpt Study 1:

"You can go out and do other things when other people aren't around, so that's really nice you can go to the pool or you can go to the gym you know when people are all at work. So that's good, that's a good part of it." [MLS002RN]

B)*paid body work/ maintenance*: e.g. Going to the gym, yoga classes



Potential Significance of findings:

- Makes “visible” a potentially positive aspect of the shiftworking lifestyle.
- Is that it brings attention to the *role of shift work in women’s agency* when managing the physical aspects of their work and the maintenance or care of the “body that cares”.
- Moves focus from how nurses *should care or do care for other bodies* to *how they care for their own bodies*.



So, what are we saying? Some conclusions:

Centering and privileging women's voices in analyses of shiftwork and women's health and well-being in nursing, challenges the "problem" focus of current theorising and interpretations of shiftwork

Excerpt Study 1:

"Shiftwork(er) is actually a good thing because it gives you flexibility in your life umm and the places that I've worked you've had a choice of umm setting up your own roster so therefore the idea of that, the optimum of that is that you can have a life outside of your workplace because you've set the dial" (MLS005RN)

2) what is needed therefore are more qualitative studies that bring in women's voices, as they have the ability to debunk the myth of shiftwork as only a problem for the worker. Broader interpretations of the meaning of shiftwork to (women) workers are necessary for inform more contextually relevant re-structuring of shiftwork

3) it is possible that some of the "negative" impacts attributed to shiftwork are not due to shiftwork as/in itself, but may be due to issues in the organisation of shiftwork, such as: working conditions; shift assignment (including the ability of the shift worker to control/determine the shifts they work) and work schedule. Perhaps this could be summed up in this quotation from one of the participants