

TRAJECTORY THEORY OF NURSING

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The science of preventive and therapeutic interventions has advanced rapidly over the past several decades. However gaps in the knowledge remain related to the promotion and restoration of optimal health and quality of life of individuals and families across the life span.

Trajectory in health means “change in health status over time and the actions taken by patients, families and health professionals to manage or shape the course of illness.”

Health over time results from multiple factors operating in nested genetic, biological, behavioral, social, cultural, environmental, political, and economic contexts that change as a person develops. True understanding of health and illness experiences and effective intervention for a specific individual, family, group, or population requires insight about the personal health trajectory. Physical growth, psychobiological development, and the overall life course are associated with health trajectories. The terms *illness trajectories* and *disease trajectories* have been used to describe the course or progression of chronic disease as experienced over time (Hyman & Corbin, 2001).

Understanding the course and cause of change in health over time allows anticipation of people at greatest risk for adverse trajectories and events and thus enhances understanding of factors that influence change in health over time and also permit examination of the effects of interventions on the trajectory. Thus, knowledge about the course and causes of change in health status over time creates the possibility for control by influencing the trajectory itself. Self-care and the actions of health

professionals, including nurses, can be directed at all levels of the nested system to impact health over time as a positive resource for life (World Health Organization, 1986).

Historical Evolution of (Trajectory Model) Theory

The trajectory model is a nursing model that particularly considers the situation of people with chronic diseases. It has been developed by Juliet Corbin, a nurse and nursing scientist, and by the sociologist Anselm Strauss (“Corbin-Strauss-Model”). Concerning its application, it is based on empiric research which has been carried out over a period of approximately 30 years in terms of the “Grounded Theory”.

Trajectory is the description for a holistic, case accompanying nursing system with one permanent caregiver that includes the patient's biography and his social field in chronic and very serious course of the disease. The patient is seen as an active partner in health, prevention of disease and rehabilitation. Hereby, the involved nursing person supports the patient in his independence, self-help and self-determination and helps to enable him to live as much as possible “normal” life. Nurse assists him to gain access to the sources of health- and social facility benefits, offers a continuum of care and accompanies him custodially during the whole case history. The model intends to transfer the Case Management into practice. The trajectory model particularly considers the situation of people with chronic diseases.

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