

Modeling Marie Curie: How student nurses can contribute to evidence-based practice during the COVID-19 era

Dear Editor,

When reading the article by Lake (2020), I was interested to learn about the methods through which nursing research has combated COVID-19 complications such as “restricted access to health care, surging demand for health care personnel, and the moral distress that health care providers face” (Lake, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis led to a conversation with a more experienced mentor who helped me find my voice. As a nursing student and an employee at a nursing research center, I am inclined to share my experience. My aspirations to be the next Florence Nightingale fell to the wayside, but I found resilience in modeling myself after Marie Curie.

Marie Curie invented and acquired funding for 20 radiological cars during World War I to help army surgeons with X-rays and trained 150 women to help drive them (Jorgensen, 2017). On March 12 at 11:46, I was entering data for a multicenter clinical trial when I received the first of many emails informing me that I would no longer be allowed to return to the institution as a student for clinical rotations. I continued with an uncertain future. As our nursing research department transitioned to the online world, I was given more responsibilities. With these new opportunities, I realized that my work in research was the essential role that I could play during this global pandemic.

History learned from Marie Curie embodied that women have much more to offer science. I wanted to be a Florence Nightingale, but I could not, and I felt worried about the future of my educational journey. My fears about falling behind on learning essential skills were alleviated through the lessons learned from research: to question norms, critically analyze data, and to effectively communicate our findings to the community. COVID-19 has required nurses to fully utilize their training and skill, and nursing students can take this opportunity to develop those skills. It took time for me to recognize the risk versus benefit of having students, not on the floors. There are many ways students can serve the profession. Actively participating in research is one way I will help the nursing profession.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflict of interests.

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