

## **2026 Research Trajectory**

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### **Background**

With unique professional background and nursing experience, my research trajectory looks a bit different. My nursing passion is to promote quality patient outcomes by risk identification and mitigation. Early career work in nursing regulation fostered this passion with exposure to safety with entry to practice and practice issues focused on mitigation of risk in the nursing profession. I saw mistakes and near misses and the challenges of newly licensed nurses to identify priority risks among the many required screenings and assessments.

### **Education**

Dissertation work compared licensure discipline among healthcare professions. This work used a large data set and evaluated the different ways substance use issues are addressed. This work provided experience in large data set use and quantitative methods. During my doctoral work, I gained valuable content expertise in policy, health services research, leadership, pharmacological pain control, substance use disorders, and evidence-based practice.

### **Research Experience**

This educational work and practice expertise set up a foundation to return home to establish a new academic practice partnership with the University of Wyoming and Cheyenne Regional Medical Center (CRMC) for five years. CRMC is a magnet facility that required a research nurse scientist to develop outcome measures and design research for practice projects for nurses. Much of this work was promoting and developing scholarship for practicing nurses, assisting heavily in research and project design, publication, and dissemination of results. I designed and supported several practice projects in various practice areas. This wide range of implementation projects is reflected in my publication history.

During this time, I evaluated pain assessment and use of different pain assessment tools. I piloted a functional pain assessment tool with nurses and measured the patient and nurse satisfaction followed by full implementation following positive outcomes. My work was presented at the state and university research conventions and to the American Nurses Credentialing Center Magnet Accreditors. Publication and dissemination with this project is ongoing.

With a nursing student and nurse resident, I designed a project to evaluate nurses workarounds with the current suicide screening process in the Emergency Department.

Nurses avoidance of screening questions were stemming from a perceived barrier of a very strict policy of removing patient belongings with any history of suicidal thoughts. The use of a suicide screening tool addressing recent suicidal thoughts with support for use in pediatric and adult populations. I was awarded a University grant for mental health to evaluate the use of the ASQ screening tool in the emergency room.

### **Research Interests**

My research interest is in implementation science. This is where I feel I can provide evidence to support improved practice and patient outcomes. Evaluating the use of screening and assessment practices identifies possible barriers nurses face in practice as well as measuring positive or negative impact on nursing practice and patient outcomes. Working with pain assessment has become a passion and priority for me. Anecdotal evidence and literature support the need for research to improve pain assessment and the treatment of acute pain. My dissertation work with substance use disorder provided insight into the potential misuse and mismanagement of pain interventions. The science of pain is fascinating to me, and I want to contribute to the body of evidence on behalf of nursing.

### **Research Agenda**

Moving forward, I seek to focus my work in implementation to pain science, even if I am supporting other projects as a nurse scientist. I plan to use my practice experience and passion for risk mitigation and pain assessment to research the use of pain assessment and screening. There are identified research needs in implementation science, pain science, academia, and transition to practice.

Over the next three to five years, I plan to explore pain screening and assessment: the evidence-based nursing practices, tools, and barriers to effective pain management by nurses.

- Evaluate the academic and clinical education of pain assessment in nursing.
- Evaluate the perceptions and use of pain assessment screening tools by nurses.
- Evaluate the implementation of pharmacologic pain interventions following assessment.

I would like to develop my grant writing to secure 1-2 funded grants.

My goals for dissemination are to present at 2-3 appropriate conferences with 5+ publications with my own research work.