Nurses and Media: Implications for Nurse Executives

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Overview

• Woodhull Study Revisited
• Strategies you can use to increase your visibility in health news media and the visibility of your research.
Background

• Diversity in journalism: newsrooms, topics and sources
• Women’s Media Center and Global Media Monitoring Project: women in journalism
  o 24% of newsroom
  o 36% of sources in news stories
• Nurses: largest group of health professionals; 90% women
• To what extent are nurses used as sources for health-related news stories?
Woodhull Study Revisited

• Original Study in 1997: The Woodhull Study on Nurses and the Media: Health Care’s Invisible Partner
• Nancy Woodhull, a founding editor of USA Today
• 7 newspapers; 3 news weeklies;
  3 trade publications
• Key finding: Nurses were invisible in health news media
Nurses were rarely quoted in healthcare news

In 1997,
4% in newspapers
1% in weeklies and industry publications
Impact of the IOM Report, The Future of Nursing?
Phase 1. The Woodhull Study Revisited: Nurses’ Representation in Health News Media 20 Years Later: Journal of Nursing Scholarship, September 2018

• Diana J. Mason, PhD, RN, FAAN, Senior Policy Service Professor, GWU School of Nursing Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
• Laura Nixon, MPH, Senior Media Researcher, Berkeley Media Studies Group
• Barbara Glickstein, MPH, RN, Director of Communications and Media Projects, GWU School of Nursing Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
• Sarah Han, BA, Research Associate, Berkeley Media Studies Group
• Laura Cutler, BA, Research Associate, Berkeley Media Studies Group
• Kristi Westphaln, PhD, RN, Senior Fellow, GWU SON Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
Print news analysis methods

Sources
  • Newspapers (7), weeklies (3), healthcare industry publications (3)

September 1997
  • 2,234 articles

September 2017
  • 537 articles (random sample)
Nurses rarely quoted in healthcare news*

In 1997,

4% in newspapers
1% in weeklies and industry publications

*Difference is not statistically significant
Nurses rarely quoted in healthcare news*

In 1997,
4% in newspapers
1% in weeklies and industry publications

In 2017,
2% in newspapers and weeklies
1% in industry publications

*Difference is not statistically significant
When Were Nurses Used as Sources?

• On nursing issues: e.g. APRN scope of practice
Nurses mainly quoted about the nursing profession

"There has been an erosion of respect. We have to dispel that notion that being assaulted is just ‘part of the job’. It is not."

~Pam Cipriano, President of the American Nurses Association
Nurses were absent from stories about policy.
Where nurses do appear or are mentioned

Stories about healthcare quality and public health

“…Pairing a primary-care physician with a registered nurse, two medical assistants and a nurse practitioner or a resident physician has led to better management of chronic conditions and reduced reliance on the emergency department….”
Female sources are underrepresented

1997

Women: 25%
Men: 75%

2017

Women: 34%
Men: 65%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLES</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>(%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policymakers</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients/Families</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified Clinicians</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nurses</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Researchers</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEOS/Administrators</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-medical healthcare</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Both</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>23%</td>
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Nurses and women are underrepresented in images

Politicians, white males, patients and families, and unidentified clinicians in white coats or scrubs
Limitations

- Nurses are likely represented as sources at a higher level because editorial styles remain a barrier.
- Nonetheless, editorial styles have not changed much in 20 years, so comparisons with the original study are likely valid.
- This study examined only the print sources used in the original Woodhull study. Future research should examine online health news media.
Conclusion

Nurses remain invisible in health news stories.
Phase 2. Health Journalists’ Experiences with Using Nurses as Sources
American Journal of Nursing, October 2018

• Diana J. Mason, PhD, RN, FAAN, Senior Policy Service Professor, GWU School of Nursing Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
• Barbara Glickstein, MPH, RN, Director of Communications and Media Projects, GW School of Nursing Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
• Kristi Westphaln, PhD, RN, Senior Fellow, GWU SON Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement
What do health journalists perceive to be the barriers and facilitators to using nurses as sources in new stories?
Methods

• Qualitative; semi-structured interviews
• Snowballing technique
• 10 health news journalists; 2 were men
• Telephone interviews recorded, 30 to 60 minutes
• Transcribed
• Individual researcher analysis, discussion and consensus on themes
Biases about women, nurses, and positions of authority in health care impede journalists’ use of diverse sources in health reporting.
Subthemes
• Editorial biases, policies and processes can get in the way of using nurses as sources.
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• Journalists don’t fully understand the range of nurses’ roles, work, and education.
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• Journalists don’t fully understand the range of nurses’ roles, work, and education.

• **Journalists don’t know how to find nurses to interview and have limited time to track them down.**
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• Journalists don’t fully understand the range of nurses’ roles, work, and education.

• Journalists don’t know how to find nurses to interview and have limited time to track them down.

• Communications staff of health care organizations and universities aren’t offering nurses as sources unless journalists ask for them.
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• Communications staff of health care organizations and universities aren’t offering nurses as sources unless journalists ask for them.

• **Nurses and nursing organizations aren’t being strategic about accessing and engaging journalists.**
Funders

Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Beatrice Renfield Foundation
Sigma Theta Tau International
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
Donald and Barbara Jonas Foundation
National League for Nursing
Wolters Kluwer Health
On Course Learning
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Organization of Nurse Executives
Implications for Nurse Researchers

• Publication of original research in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal is necessary but not sufficient for dissemination of the findings and new ideas generated by the research.
Beyond Tenure

- The Fallacy of “Impact” Factors
Develop a Multi-Media Dissemination Plan for Your Research

• Translational paper
• Commentaries and narratives in scholarly publications
• Op eds in news media
• Policy brief
• Social media
• Broadcast media
• Letters to Editors
But beware of the Ingelfinger Rule.
Barriers to Communicating Research to Journalists

• Accessing journalists
• Framing the research
• Translating the research
Accessing Journalists

• Follow journalists on Twitter and develop relationships with them.
• Meet with your organization’s PR person; get support of your Dean or CEO
• Discuss and coordinate media outreach with the journal
• Be responsive to journalists’ requests for interviews
• Once interviewed, offer other story/research ideas
What Makes the News?

• Controversy
• Injustice
• Sensation
• Timeliness
• Prominence
• Conflict
• Novelty
• Emotional
Framing Your Research

• Shaping the message for different audiences
• Values, beliefs and priorities of target audience
• Narratives or stories that support the frame
• Key statistic(s) that support the frame
Framing

• What is the controversy, injustice, conflict, new idea—the NEWS—in your research?
  • It may be the problem you addressed rather than your findings.
  • Is there one person’s story that frames the problem or your findings?
What is the story you have to tell?

From problem to intervention to impact
Paint a Picture

• Data can be overwhelming for a lay audience.
  • Select one or two key statistics.
• Life-like examples put meat around the bones of the story.
Tips for Communicating Your Work

• What is the primary message? Develop 3 key messages to prepare.
• Usually, no theoretical frameworks per se
• No logistic regression details
• Be prepared with context and more detail
And as Nurse Leaders...

• Get media training if you need it.
• Call for nursing research journals to develop media strategies to disseminate what they publish.
• Call for nursing research conferences to develop media strategies to attract journalists.
• Offer to be a resource for journalists
  • For interviews
  • To recommend other nurses
  • Don’t always expect to be quoted; you can still shape the journalist’s story
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