

Nursing and Care programme

Project ideas Fundamentals of Care Evidence-based Practice: application and evidence



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Keywords: nursing specialists, nurses, carers, evidence-based practice, fundamentals of care, autonomy.

Purpose of call

This call for proposals is designed to encourage the use of current interventions in evidence-based practice (EBP) and to further expand this knowledge for day-to-day nursing and care practice in all sectors of Dutch healthcare.

EBP interventions in nursing and/or care related to the Fundamentals of Care framework will be used and further expanded in practice. Your project idea should make clear that the selected intervention(s) will help enhance the quality of care and help solve urgent issues in Dutch healthcare, such as dual ageing, providing the right care in the right place and/or sustainability/environmental issues.

The research projects should produce:

1. knowledge of the impact of working according to EBP on the 3 fundamentals of care pillars
2. products related to this knowledge that can be disseminated/published
3. a vision for the consolidation of project results in the long term. The end products should include a consolidation plan

Nursing and care professionals who are involved in the project and who work in the primary process of care delivery should have an important (autonomous) role in setting up and implementing the study. They must be adequately facilitated at individual, team and organisation level to continue performing interventions based on the latest scientific evidence after the project has ended.

Project ideas should therefore also make clear:

- a. how the autonomous role of nursing and care professionals is to be concretised, defined and operationalised in the study and in the care organisation(s) concerned
- b. how the characteristics of nursing and care professionals affect their autonomous role in the project. These characteristics exist at 3 levels:
 - individual/professional (this includes level of education, sex and gender, age, socioeconomic situation and cultural background)
 - team
 - organisation
- c. how an autonomous role (or the lack thereof) affects the application of EBP

Evidence-based practice

Working according to the principle of [evidenced-based practice](#) involves the reasoned application of the highest level of evidence on the reliability pyramid. This allows decisions taken by healthcare professionals to be based on a combination of knowledge from scientific research, the professional's clinical skills and the preferences of the patient.

Fundamentals of Care framework

The [Fundamentals of Care framework](#) states that the relationship between the patient and their nurse/carer is the key priority. The Fundamentals of Care framework has 3 pillars (Heinen et al., 2019).

1. Physical aspects, addressing matters like safety, activities of daily life (ADL), nutrition and mobility.
2. Psychosocial aspects, which involves things like ensuring the patient feels respected, and also that they are informed about and involved in their care and retain control.

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3. The relationship between patient and professional, the basis of good, appropriate care. This includes things like empathy and compassion, and also setting goals in consultation with the patient and ensuring continuity of care.

The framework helps professionals to provide person-centred care (Heinen et al., 2019).

The framework also makes it clear that care is provided within a context: the organisation in which you work, the healthcare system and policy. Autonomy, an innovative and professional working and learning culture and sufficient resources are important prerequisites for the development of a relationship of trust with the patient, in order to be able to provide good care.

Autonomy

Strengthening professional autonomy and the position of nurses and carers is currently a key concern in government, society and the healthcare sector. This is not only due to the social challenges related to dual ageing. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that carers, nurses and nursing specialists are a vital link in all sectors when it comes to the provision of high-quality care. However, the application of appropriate nursing and care interventions seems to be determined more by other disciplines than by the nursing and care disciplines themselves.

Autonomy is a broad concept. In her role as Chief Nursing Officer at the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, Bianca Buurman (2020) defined it as follows: 'It's about the opportunities an organisation offers its staff to organise their work for themselves, about the influence a professional has on the development of the field in their own team, within the organisation and nationally, and the way in which professionals are facilitated in this, with a formal role, career opportunities, training, recognition and appreciation.' It is this definition of autonomy that is applicable in this call for proposals.

Examples of autonomy when it comes to the substance of one's job can be found in practice, in the form of things like job sharing, research nurses and dual management in district nursing. This is autonomy at the level of the primary process. In other words, autonomy in terms of nursing and/or care interventions, arranging them in the best possible way for the individual patient, and possibly deviating from current EBP quality standards and protocols if there are reasons to do so. It is also about how the work is organised (in a team, organisation, or nationally), how professionals are able to develop and how career opportunities are created.

ZonMw Nursing and Care programme

This call is part of ZonMw's Nursing and Care programme, which is designed to enhance the professionalism of nurses, carers and nursing specialists, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the profession and the quality of care.

Eligible candidates

Project ideas may be submitted by partnerships in the nursing and care sector. The partnership should consist of 1 or more Dutch healthcare organisations and 1 or more Dutch research organisations within the meaning of EU law on state aid plus 1 or more publicly-funded Dutch educational institutions.

Sums available

The total budget available for grants in this round is € 1,500,000. A maximum of € 150,000 is available for individual projects. The maximum project duration is 2 years.

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Relevance criteria

Application and development of knowledge

- The EBP intervention to be applied must concern the nursing and/or care sector, and be related to the Fundamentals of Care framework.
- The subject of the project idea should come from healthcare practice, be submitted by healthcare professionals and should make it clear that it addresses knowledge gaps, problems or challenges experienced in practice.
- It should be evident from the project idea that the interventions to be applied will contribute to the quality of care and to solutions to urgent issues in Dutch healthcare.
- The project should provide an insight into the impact of working in accordance with EBP on the 3 pillars of the Fundamentals of Care framework.
- It should be evident from the project idea how the autonomous role of nursing and care professionals will be concretised, defined and operationalised in the study and the healthcare organisation(s) as a whole.
- The project should develop knowledge of how the characteristics of nursing and care professionals affect their autonomous role in the project. These characteristics exist at 3 levels:
 - individual/professional (this includes level of education, sex and gender, age, socioeconomic situation and cultural background)
 - team
 - organisation
- The project should yield knowledge of how an autonomous role (or lack thereof) affects the application of EBP.
- Describe the current and desired situation in the specific healthcare institution(s), and what the situation will be at the end of the project.
- Make it clear how the knowledge from the project will be made more broadly accessible and applicable to healthcare practice, policy or further research.

Use of current knowledge

- The intervention(s) in the project should be chosen on the basis of recommendations from current authorised quality standards, quality frameworks, knowledge agendas/syntheses or research programming studies.
- It should be evident that the project idea ties in with existing knowledge and instruments concerning matters such as implementation, implementation coaches, professionalisation, leadership programmes, autonomy, balanced healthcare provision and improved quality in healthcare by and for the nursing and care professions.

Collaboration with relevant stakeholders

- One prerequisite for funding is that the project should involve collaboration between at least 1 healthcare organisation, 1 research institution and 1 publicly-funded educational institution. Describe the collaboration, including partnership agreements, addressing matters such as the tasks, roles and responsibilities of each of the parties.
- If the project idea focuses on a sector where the majority of care is delivered by professionals with a secondary vocational (mbo) qualification, the partnership should include at least 1 secondary vocational college.
- Nursing and care professionals participating in the project should have an important autonomous role in the setting up and implementation of the study. They should be facilitated to ensure that

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they can actively participate in the project, and apply its results in the longer term. Guarantees must be given that the results of the project will be consolidated after the project has ended.

Quality criteria

Objective and question/task

Describe the objective and the question/task, bearing particular attention to clarity, scope and originality.

Plan of action

Describe the chosen methods and planned analyses, including the theoretical and/or empirical evidence on which they are based.

- Make it clear which nursing and care professionals are the focus of the project, and how their participation will be facilitated.
- Show how nurses, nursing specialists and carers will be actively involved in drawing up and implementing the plan of action, and consolidating the results.
- The project idea should include a vision for the consolidation of the project results in the long term. The end products of the project should include a consolidation plan.
- Describe and present arguments in support of the intervention(s) at the centre of the project, and which healthcare sector the project will target.
- The project idea should make clear how the EBP intervention is to be applied in practice and who will be involved.
- Describe the current situation in specific terms and show that there is sufficient support for the project at different levels in the healthcare organisation.
- Describe the likelihood that the project results will be used on a larger scale.

Feasibility

The timetable should be clear and realistic. Present clear arguments showing that the goal of the application can be achieved in the time and with the expertise, staff, facilities and resources available.

Insight into results

- The project idea should provide an insight into the results expected from the planned study.
- The project idea should specify the level at which results will occur: patient, professional, team or organisation. The full project proposal should make clear what products the project will deliver.
- The project idea should reveal how the results will contribute to the quality cycle. Applying the intervention might for example prompt new research, changes to recommendations in current quality standards and/or changes to daily healthcare practice.
- Show how nursing and care professionals, teams and healthcare organisations will be given feedback on the project results and how this will support learning and improvements on the workforce.

Project group or individual

- Describe how the profile of the project group will enhance the quality of your study.
- Describe which type of practising nursing and care professionals will take part in the project group, and how they will be involved and facilitated in their role in the design and implementation of the research method.
- Projects awarded funding should form a network in which knowledge and experience is shared at ZonMw project meetings, and collaboration is encouraged.