Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science and Master’s of Nursing

of

JUDY STURM

BScN (University of Victoria, 1996)


School of Nursing
School of Health Information Science

Friday, January 13, 2017
2:00PM
Human and Social Development Building
Room A451

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Lenora Marcellus, School of Nursing, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)
Dr. Francis Lau, School of Health Information Science, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:
Dr. Debora Begoray, Department of Curriculum & Instruction, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Rosaline Canessa, Department of Geography, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Health disparity research indicates that health illiteracy is associated with poorer health outcomes, greater risk of hospitalization, higher emergency room utilization, and increased death (Collins, Currie, Bakken, Vawdrey & Stone, 2012; Skopelja, Whipple & Richwine, 2013). Health information is increasingly being transitioned to online formats and according to Usher and Skinner (2010) the newest challenge that healthcare consumers face in taking control of their health is their ability to access, evaluate and incorporate the large amount of health information available on the Internet. Achieving a better understanding of the eHealth literacy levels of Aboriginal women and how they use technology to access health information may support better health outcomes in a variety of settings including the perinatal period which is important not only for the mother’s health, but her child’s as well.

This mixed methods study explored the eHealth literacy knowledge, attitudes and skills of urban Aboriginal women in the perinatal period residing in a small city in British Columbia. A convergent parallel design was used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from five study participants. The results revealed that urban Aboriginal women in the perinatal period were comfortable and competent in accessing health information on the Internet. They identified the following as areas for improvement: (1) identifying if the information they retrieve is credible, (2) improving the cultural appropriateness of health information and websites, (3) improving access through continuing to build technology and search skills for Aboriginal women, and (4) supporting better access to the Internet and technology equipment for those Aboriginal women still affected by the digital divide.