

## **Holistic Healthcare Model Sheds Different Light on Nightingale's Work**

*Newly published research makes whole person health care attainable.*

Wellesley, MA (PRWeb via [PRWeb](#)) January 23, 2008 -- Florence Nightingale is best known for her nursing of wounded soldiers during the Crimean War and as the founder of secular nursing. Today for the first time, however, thanks to newly published research, healthcare professionals can draw on Nightingale's less known vision of a whole person approach to health care, which looks at five important components of health and healing. This five-aspect approach was thematic throughout Nightingale's work, which looked at the physical, mental, nutritional, environmental and spiritual aspects of health and healing.

Authored by Georgianna Donadio, D.C., Ph.D., founder and director of the National Institute of Whole Health ([www.niwh.org](http://www.niwh.org)), *An Examination of and Potential Solution for the Current Crisis within the American Health Care System: A Nightingale Inspired Model of Relationship Centered Care* outlines a health care system that reinforces the mission of NIWH and its vision to facilitate the transformation of health care in all settings to include whole person health care and shared decision-making.

"There has been an enormous amount of time, energy and money spent trying to fix a failing system, when many of the answers for transforming this system can be found in the successful solutions of the past," said Donadio. "Nightingale was a true visionary and her genius not only anticipated the problems we are facing today in health care, but she also provided the tools to solve them."

Donadio's original research demonstrates how Nightingale's whole person approach to health care transformed the most dire medical and surgical conditions at the Scutari Barracks, the main field hospital used by the British during the Crimean War, and how the same measures Nightingale took to correct these conditions can be applied to the failing US health care system today.

The effectiveness of a Nightingale inspired, whole person focused patient health education model, was demonstrated in a 2 year Pilot Trial Study, *Evaluating Whole Health Education in Cardiac Rehabilitation*, at Union Hospital, a Harvard affiliate hospital, in Lynn, MA. The study found that the 50 cardiac rehabilitation patients participating in the study, after working with Whole Health Educators for six months, demonstrated such significant quality of life outcomes, compared to the 50 patient control group, that the hospital created a Department of Whole Health Education and brought the model into four additional out-patient departments, as well as the cardiac rehab department.

Upon reading Donadio's work, Barbara Dossey, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, the world's most renowned Nightingale biographer and scholar, who is also an award-winning author, founder and international co-director of the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH), declared Donadio a Nightingale scholar based on the research content, and had this to say about the work, "There are very few of us that have devoted such a huge amount of time to bring Nightingale forward for the 21st century."

Donadio joins only a handful of Florence Nightingale scholars who are here in the U.S., and a limited number of scholars who are abroad. Donadio's career in healthcare started more than 40 years ago following a car accident that left her unable to walk. Later, she went on to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and an award-winning pioneer of the concepts of whole health education and whole person care.

"In healthcare today we need a system that truly is driven by the needs of patients and their families," said Dossey. "Time and time again, the needs have shown us that we must have a prevention-focused model that focuses on total health and well-being that is delivered not just by the physician, but all healthcare professionals who are acting as health educators and coaches. This was Nightingale's vision and Dr. Donadio's work brings that vision to the forefront in the form of an attainable model. Her work represents a significant contribution to efforts to facilitate change in the practice of health care in all settings."

Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, a fellow Nightingale scholar and Donadio's mentor on the project added, "Dr. Donadio's research has a real relevance to issues today. It is work that doesn't get put away on a dusty shelf and is applicable to the real world of American healthcare."

Florence Nightingale died in 1910 and in her lifetime authored over 14,000 handwritten letters and documents that outline a philosophical foundation important to the science and art of contemporary health care. Towards the end of her life she functioned as a health minister, whose work circled the globe, educating leaders and the public about global health issues.

#### About the National Institute of Whole Health

Founded in Boston in 1977, and currently headquartered in Wellesley, MA, the National Institute of Whole Health (NIWH) offers the most established, professionally accredited integrative whole health certification programs in the US. NIWH's offerings include a Norman Cousins Award nominated Best Practice model -- the Whole Health Educationâ certification program, a Whole Health Educatorâ program for Nurses, endorsed by the American Holistic Nurses Association, a Nutrition Educator certification program and a Whole Health Coaching certification program. All of the Whole Health curriculums can be completed in-person or via DVD distance learning. Recognized nationally as the pioneers of Whole Health Education®, the school has instructed thousands of students all over the U.S., and now through its DVD distance learning programs educates students on five continents. For more information, visit [www.niwh.org](http://www.niwh.org) or call (888) 354-HEAL (4325).

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