

THE VÄXJÖ/BOURNEMOUTH COLLABORATION FOR LIFEWORLD-LED CARE AND EDUCATION

Växjö University is a major regional university in south-eastern Sweden with around 14,000 students and is well known for its international profile. Some of their single-subject courses and Masters Programmes are taught in English. Educational opportunities are organised through seven schools:

- The School of Management and Economics
- The School of the Humanities
- The School of Technology and Design
- The School of Education
- The School of Social Science
- The School of Health Sciences and Social Work
- The School of Mathematics and Systems Engineering.

Prominent research themes at the university include Labour Market Policy, Citizen Participation and Social Inclusion, Entrepreneurship, Migration, Forest- Wood- and Bioenergy Technology.

Research and teaching staff from the Centre for Qualitative Research, School of Health and Social Care at Bournemouth University (<http://www.qualitative-research.co.uk>) and the Centre for Lifeworld-led Care and the Centre for Lifeworld-led Education, School of Health Sciences and Social Work at Växjö University have been collaborating since August 2003. The collaboration began with an invitation from Karin Dahlberg, Professor of Caring Science at Växjö University. The invitation was made after an international residential event that she and her colleagues had hosted for the purpose of discussing the relationship between qualitative research, caring practices, and education. This meeting had included participants from the Universities of Southern California, Dallas, Minnesota, Bournemouth and Växjö. It was here that it had become apparent that a collaborative effort between Växjö University's Health Sciences Department and Bournemouth University's School of Health and Social Care could yield creative and distinctive possibilities for faculty exchange and joint research projects. Since then there have been two meetings per year held alternatively in Bournemouth and Växjö.

AN INTEGRATING IDEA

The central idea that has emerged from these meetings is the notion of lifeworld-led care and education. It addresses the question of how patients' and clients' lives and experiences can play a more central role in how care is understood and delivered, and also, how such experiences can inform the way that we educate and train our health and social care professionals. It was thought that the role of qualitative research may be particularly helpful in articulating the experiences of patients and clients because its findings focus on the holistic and complex interrelationships between different aspects of people's lives and their narrative trajectory as a whole. It was also thought that a return to such 'seamless' narratives may help to balance the inevitable increasing specialisation of health and social care practices, with a complementary focus on the continuity of how citizens actively process and negotiate multiple experiences and concerns. The concept of lifeworld-led care and education brings together a number of other trends that are emerging in health and social care policy

and practice: an increasing emphasis on client-centred service, the empowerment of the people's perspectives as citizens, the 'expert patient, and quality of life concerns. It also brings together a number of emerging trends in practice-related education such as the use of life narratives and experiences in scenario-based or problem-based learning, and the notion of 'situated learning' and 'reflective practice' in supporting the development of clinical judgement and ethical imagination. The central idea was then to jointly articulate the theoretical dimensions of lifeworld-led care and education, and then to pursue some of its practical implications for research, education and practice. It thus started out as a research and scholarship collaboration, but soon moved on to incorporate staff and student exchange experiences in teaching and learning.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

- Sweden's Council for the renewal of Higher Education has awarded substantial funding to Växjö to pursue a two year project entitled 'Developing a didactic method that emphasizes lifeworld as a basis for learning'. The centrality of our collaboration was emphasised in this application, and funding provision has been made for further collaborative meetings. One of the outcomes of this project is a consideration of how the teaching methodologies employed are transferable between a Swedish and British context.
- Faculty interaction or exchange has included twelve colleagues from Bournemouth University and ten colleagues from Växjö University. This included Ph.D. students from both universities. Professor Dahlberg has visited Bournemouth to conduct a masterclass that was open to a national audience as well as to Masters and Ph.D. students from both universities, and which focused on some of the ideas discussed above. This masterclass also carried M level credits. Professor Todres from the School of Health and Social Care taught on the Växjö Doctoral programme on two occasions, and noted with interest how the Swedish doctoral education system allowed doctoral students from other Swedish Universities to attend the programme.
- Two joint publications between Växjö and Bournemouth colleagues has been achieved. These papers set out the broad philosophical and conceptual scope of lifeworld-led care and provide an ambitious programme for further possible collaboration. The title of the first article was: Lifeworld-led Healthcare: re-visiting a humanising philosophy that integrates emerging trends. It was published in *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* in 2007. The title of the second article was: Lifeworld-led Healthcare is more than patient-led care: An Existential View of Well-being. It was published in *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* in 2009.
- A joint symposium was presented to the 4th Nordic Interdisciplinary Conference on Qualitative Methods in the service of health. The symposium incorporated three presentations that demonstrated the range of our on-going work, and covered:
 - The philosophical foundations of lifeworld-led care
 - Innovative forms of dissemination of qualitative research findings that serve citizen-oriented approaches to care
 - Illustrations of lifeworld-led education

- A joint symposium was presented to the International Human Sciences Research Conference, 2007. The symposium presented updates of our scholarly and research work together in the areas of Lifeworld-led care, Lifeworld-led Education, and interactive forms of disseminating qualitative research findings to professionals and citizens.
- A research project was collaboratively designed. Its aim was to test the value of a novel generic methodology for disseminating the findings of relevant qualitative research in health and social care to citizens in useful ways. It was submitted for EU funding but was unsuccessful.
- Erasmus funding was awarded in 2008 to support Bournemouth University Staff to visit Växjö.
- Växjö members presented an overview of their distinctive undergraduate curriculum for Caring Science and kindly made this available to members of the Bournemouth group as a resource for them to consider in relation to future possible directions for their own undergraduate curricula.
- Members of the collaborative are also active in a movement to establish a European Academy of Caring Sciences. Lifeworld-led care and education is one of the three foundations on which the academy is being built.
- The collaboration has also allied itself with the Global Institute for Research in Humanizing Care Contexts and the two members of the collaborative (one from Bournemouth and one from Växjö) serve as founding board members of this organisation.

CURRENT AND FUTURE INITIATIVES

- Papers will be presented at the 2009 International Human Sciences Research Conference.
- Bournemouth University will submit a funding application to JISC that focuses on Lifeworld-led education. The research will document and evaluation how we are using lifeworld-led education in our own curricula.
- A joint publication is planned that outlines the philosophy and scope of lifeworld-led education.
- Further funding avenues for subsidising our exchanges are being explored. Växjö has kindly offered to fund a visit by two members of the Bournemouth team to Växjö in order to present a seminar to their doctoral programme.