

STATE OF THE SCIENCE OF EXPECTATIONS

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Purpose: The purpose of this poster presentation is to provide a critical analysis of the State of the Science of expectations. The analysis will include a synthesis of the concept from a conceptual, methodological, and empirical basis. Little research has explored the concept of patient expectations within the discipline of nursing. Of the available literature, much attention has been given to expectations as a component of patient satisfaction with health care.

Method: A literature search using the key words expectations, satisfaction, anticipation, beliefs, and other related concepts was conducted with nursing, medical, and social science databases. Of the available publications, 30 articles relevant to the concept were reviewed.

Findings: The review of literature supports that expectations have not been clearly defined. Research has studied expectations in terms of patient satisfaction with care, but has failed to examine patient expectations in relation to a health care event. Methodological approaches have utilized instruments to specifically measure expectations or related concepts, but the findings are limited. Studies linking expectations to specific patient populations have left a dearth of empirical data, specifically in relation to open heart surgical patients. Gaps in the literature have identified the need for a clear, conceptual understanding to form the foundation for methodological approaches for measuring expectations in relation to CABG patients and their health event.

Discussion: The findings offer support for the premise that patients have expectations about health events. Identifying the expectations of patients undergoing cardiac surgery would provide information relevant to their surgical experience. Future research would assist nurses to provide a better understanding of the surgical experience, possibly preventing unrealistic expectations that may result in distress.