

# Problem-based learning as a tool for developing elderly people's care

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## **WHY?**

- **elderly people's care is not an attractive area to work for the most of nurse students**
- **nurse students acquire research based knowledge separately from the real working environment which may increase the gap between theory and practise**
- **nurse students have difficulties to know how assessments and decisions are made, and they often accept them without questioning**
- **need to develop elderly people's care**



**The purpose** of this study was to implement problem based learning (PBL) philosophy in elderly people's home and use it as a tool to learn and develop elderly people's care.

- **to get nurse students interested in and committed to elderly people's care during their clinical training**
- **to get an experience of research and development based working in elderly people's home**
- **to develop co-operation between the school and elderly people's home to improve together the quality of elderly people's care**



## Previous studies

### **PBL:**

- **little research done in working context**
- **research results show that PBL is a good tool to improve professional development and professional practices**



**The research task was to describe how nurse students and their mentors experience problem-based learning method in elderly people's home.**

**More concrete research questions are:**

- 1. How students and mentors described the way of working in PBL process?**
- 2. How students and mentors described learning in PBL process?**
- 3. How students and mentors described practical issues in PBL process?**



## **Clinical placement**

Virekoti - a private elderly people's home  
55 clients, who all have a difficult dementia

## **Participants**

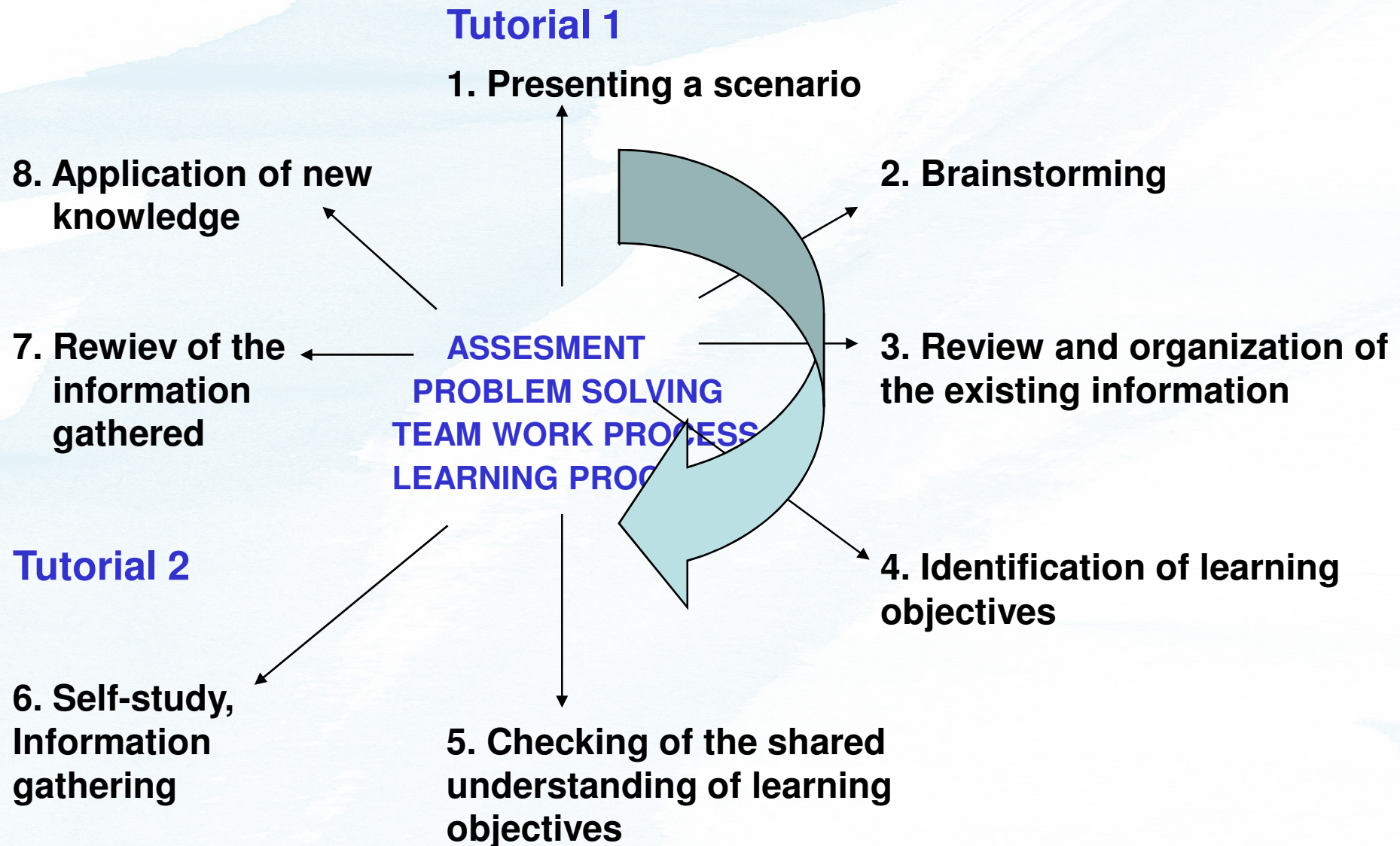
- 5 first year nurse students (first clinical training period)
- 8 mentors from Virekoti (nurses, practical nurses, physiotherapist)

## **Education for mentors**

- Evidence based working (3 h)
- Problem based learning method (2 h)
- Information search (4 h)



# PBL –cycle



# PBL sessions

## Two PBL groups

One group consisted of 2 or 3 nurse students, 4 mentors and a teacher

Both groups had their own PBL cycle, including 2 tutorial sessions:

- starting session 1,5 h and closing session 2 h

Both groups had their own case, scenario:

- a person having a dementia and depression
- a person having a dementia and pain





**The data has been collected with the help of a written essay, and the texts were analysed using content analysis.**

- all nurse students wrote the essay**
- 4 mentors wrote the essay**



# Results

## 1. The way of working in PBL process

- Challenging
- Meaningful
- Sense of community

”Challenging, had to find information and put my mind to the issue” (mentor)

”Tutorials were first confusing and unpleasant”(mentor)

”Overall, it was pleasant to work with the mentors on tutorials” (student)

”I think that PBL brought together the caretakers working in different units and improved student – mentor relations” (student)



## 2. Learning in PBL process

- Research based knowledge
- Tacit knowledge
- Professional discussion

“to remind everyone how things should be done right and to bring new and updated knowledge to the employees” (student)

“PBL tutorials were different than what they were at the school. The best was the experience and practical examples the mentors brought to the tutorials” (student)

“tutorials made it possible to have time to discuss together thoroughly a kind of the topic to which more knowledge was wished” (student)



### 3. Practical issues in PBL process

- Time

- Case

- Implementation

”there wasn’t enough time to gather the information for the closing session” (mentor)

”the case wasn’t challenging enough” (mentor)

”I felt I learned a lot from the PBL topic” (student)

”PBL works well when there are 1-2 sessions during the practical training” (student)

”Tutorials removed a certain kind of prejudices which were in our working units, and freed the minds and expectations” (student)



## Conclusions

**Problem-based learning method works well when developing professional way of working in elderly people's home.**

**PBL tutorials increases dialogue of evidence based nursing in clinical practice between nurse students, mentors and teachers.**

**To get nurse students interested in and committed to elderly people's care during their clinical training ?**



**Organizing PBL tutorials in working units needs a good planning and support from the leadership level.**

**Critical issues:**

- **Education to PBL method**
- **Commitment to develop nursing with the help of PBL method (caretakers, leaders)**
- **Co-operation between the school and working units**
- **Scenarios taken from the real situations**
- **Possibilities for information search in working units**
- **Number of scenarios and enough time**



**Thank you for your attention**



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