

# Leading and developing person-centred cultures: Unlearning rules, norms and behaviours

Brendan McCormack, The Susan Wakil Professor of Nursing.  
Head of The Susan Wakil School of Nursing and Midwifery & Dean,  
Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney

*Professor of Nursing, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh*

*Professor II, Østfold University College, Norway*

*Extraordinary Professor, University of Pretoria, South Africa*

*Professor of Nursing, Maribor University, Slovenia*

*Visiting Professor, Ulster University*

*Adjunct Professor, Zealand University Hospital/University of Southern Denmark*



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY



“The coronavirus situation provides an opportunity for all of us to pause, reset, and step up. COVID-19, like any disruption, essentially confronts each of us with a choice: (1) to freeze, turn away from others, only care for ourselves, or (2) to turn toward others to support and comfort those who need help. That choice between acting from ego or acting from ecosystem awareness is one that we face every day, every hour, every moment. The more the world sinks into chaos, desperation, and confusion, the greater our responsibility to radiate presence, compassion, and grounded action confidence” (Sharmer 2020)

<https://medium.com/presencing-institute-blog/eight-emerging-lessons-from-coronavirus-to-climate-action-683c39c10e8b>





# The Covid 19 Challenges in Aged Care

- Treating people as individuals whilst implementing blanket (IPC) policies
- Respecting residents' rights as a person whilst limiting autonomy & control
- Building mutual trust and understanding
- Developing therapeutic relationships 'from a distance' or behind a mask
- The availability of RN expertise
- The availability of specialist expertise
- Resident, family and staff wellbeing





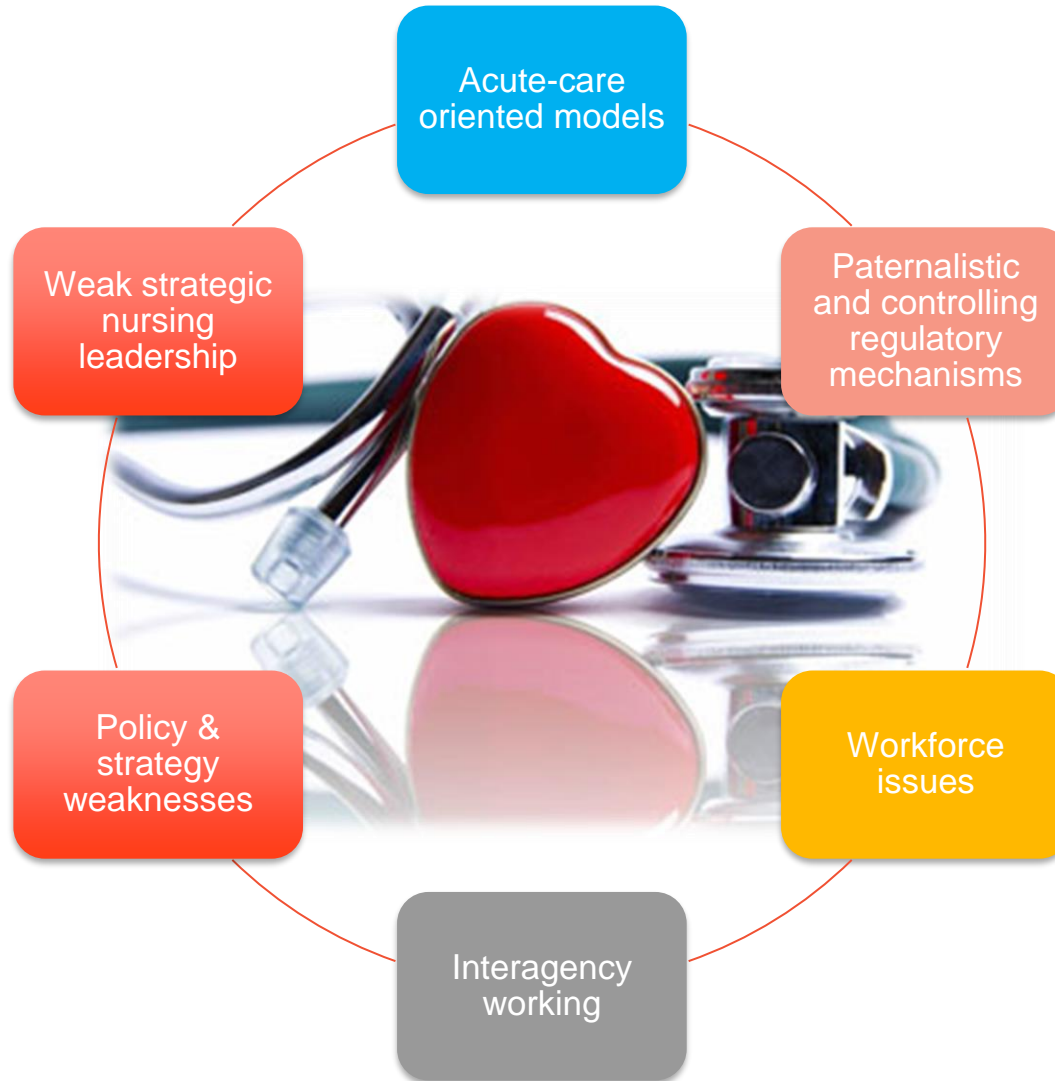
## Nursing Home Staff Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Constraints on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Testing
- Burdensome Regulations and Guidance
- Concern for Self and Family
- Concern for Residents
- Burnout
- Teamwork, Communication, and Flexibility
- Public Blame and Lack of Recognition

*(White et al 2020)*



# Challenges in our system







THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY



“The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that failing to address staffing and care models in nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities is in fact a public health issue. There will be many valuable examples learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and we hope that the importance of infection control practices and the role of RNs in residential facilities is not a lost lesson.”

*(Davidson & Szanton 2020)*



## Health: Flourishing as a Person (RCN, 2004)

### What a difference a nurse makes

*An RCN report on the benefits of expert nursing to the clinical outcomes in the continuing care of older people*

*“By health I mean the power to live a full, adult, living, breathing life in close contact with what I love - the earth and the wonders thereof - the sea, the sun, all that we mean when we speak of the external world. I want to enter into it, to be part of it, to live in it, to learn from it, to lose all that is superficial and acquired in me and to become a conscious, direct human being. I want, by understanding myself to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming so that I may be ...a child of the sun ...But warm, eager, living life - to be rooted in life – to learn, to desire, to know, to feel, to think, to act. That is what I want. And nothing less. That is what I must try for.”*



## Helping Older People to Flourish, Embracing all Dimensions of their Being

### ***Maintenance of health status***

- Maximising health status
- Assessing health status
- Preventing disease complications
- Managing risk
- Rehabilitating
- Identifying and relieving symptoms

### ***Prevention and relief of distress***

- Providing essential care and palliation
- Identifying problems and coming to terms with life
- Preventing pain
- Treating pain
- Assessing mental health

### ***Maximising life potential***

- Offering health promotion & education
- Developing throughout life
- Fostering meaningful relationships
- Contributing to life
- Reciprocating
- Coping with adversity.



<http://www.placestoflourish.org/>



# Places to Flourish

*A pattern-based approach to foster change in residential care*



The  
ATLANTIC  
*Philanthropies*

 University of  
**ULSTER**

  
**DUNDALK**  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**NHI**   
nursinghomesireland

# Culture Patterns

Patterns describe problems which occur over and over again in an environment or operational context and they describe the core of a solution to that problem in such a way that it can be used a million times over – without ever doing it the same way twice. As such, patterns can be very generalised at a conceptual level while they are absolutely unique at a local implementation level.

# We have a problem with culture!

## *CULTURE PATTERNS IN CARE HOMES*

- *Decision-making*
- *Relationships*
- *Conflict*
- *Power use*
- *Learning*
- *Environment*
- *Leadership*

# Seven typical patterns that nursing home residents experience

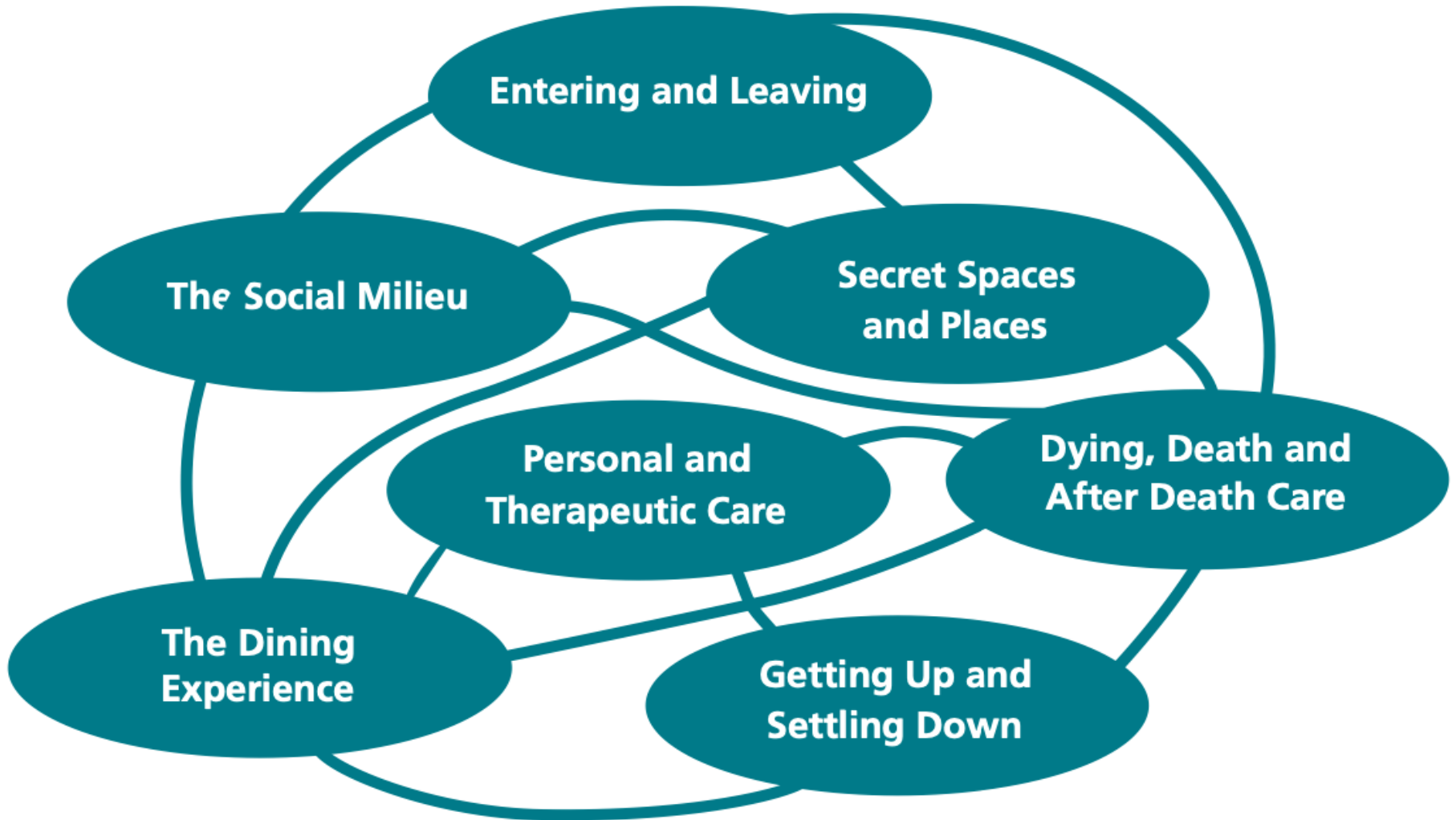


Fig 1 A Pattern Language – Ties Between the Patterns



**“There’s only one thing more stupid than stupid rules, and that’s the people who follow them.”**

***(Sam Conniffe Allende (2018)  
“Be More Pirate”)***



# Person-centred Culture



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

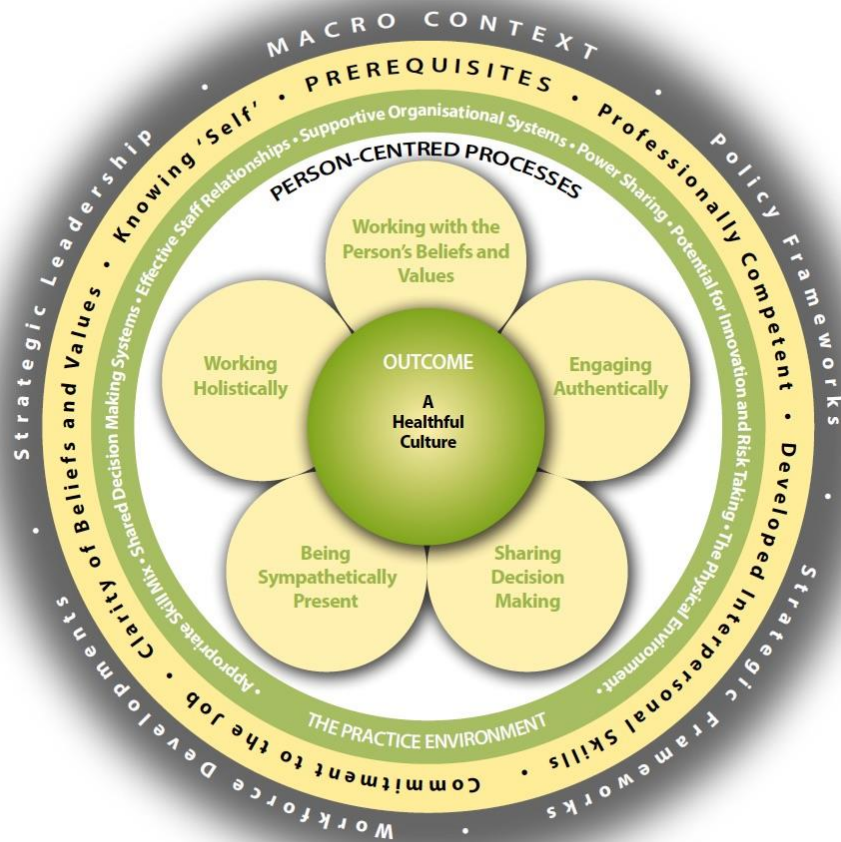


A person-centred culture enables effective practices based on the formation and fostering of healthful relationships between all team members and key stakeholders. It has explicit values of respect for persons self-determination, mutual respect and understanding. It empowers all staff to engage in continuous development and quality enhancement.

*(adapted from McCormack & McCance 2019)*



# Person-centred Practice Framework



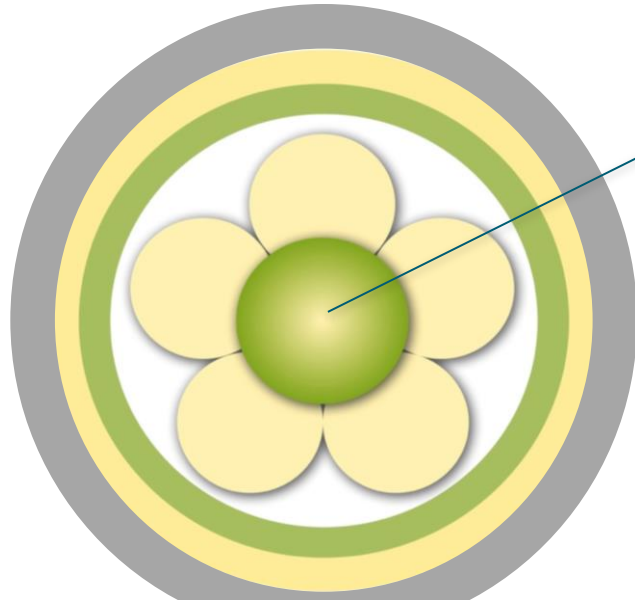
(McCance & McCormack 2021)

- Globally adopted
- Translated into 14 languages
- Used in >31 countries
- Underpinning strategy and policy frameworks
- Curriculum framework
- Theoretical framework in research
- Instrument development
  - Person-centred Practice Inventory-staff (PCPI-S)
  - PCPI-SU (service users)
  - PCPI-ST (students)
- Model development & testing  
(McCance et al 2021)

# Outcome



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY



*“By health I mean the power to live a full, adult, living, breathing life in close contact with what I love - the earth and the wonders thereof - the sea, the sun, all that we mean when we speak of the external world. I want to enter into it, to be part of it, to live in it, to learn from it, to lose all that is superficial and acquired in me and to become a conscious, direct human being. I want, by understanding myself to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming so that I may be ...a child of the sun ...But warm, eager, living life - to be rooted in life – to learn, to desire, to know, to feel, to think, to act. That is what I want. And nothing less. That is what I must try for.”*

A Healthful Culture (*living a positive life embracing all dimensions of our being*)

A healthful culture is one in which decision-making is shared, staff relationships are collaborative, leadership is transformative, innovative practices are supported and is the ultimate outcome for teams working to develop a workplace that is person-centred. **It is a culture where everyone has the potential to flourish as a person.**

Measured By:

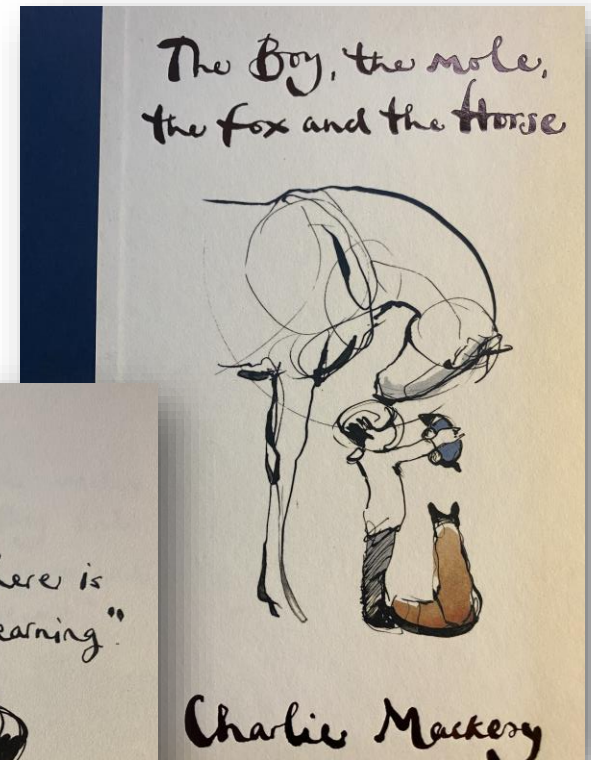
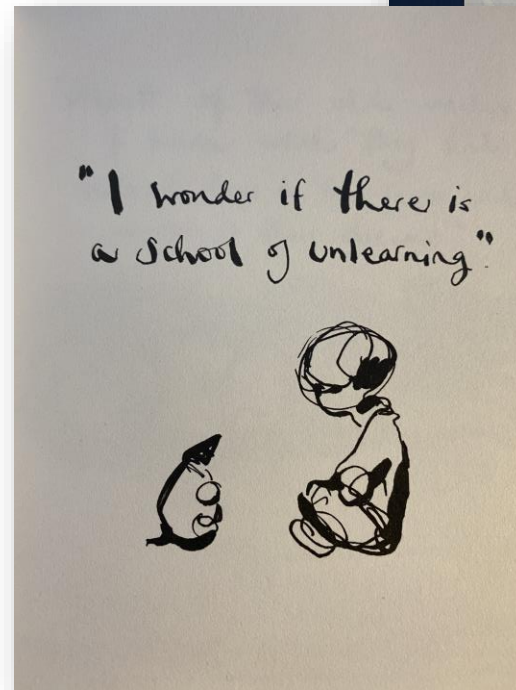
- Person-centred Practice Inventory (PCPI)
- Observations of Practice
- PcP-KPIs
- Narrative & Stories
- Routine data





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

"I wonder if there  
is a school of  
unlearning"







THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY



Queen Margaret University  
EDINBURGH



**bold** Bringing Out  
Leaders in Dementia

**bold** Bringing Out  
Leaders in Dementia

# Everyone Should Be Able To Flourish





**Throughout** **Their Lives**



**Our vision:**

Having "dementia" doesn't matter for who I am as a person or how I live my life

# Social Leadership

**humility, a willingness to learn, to share, to empower others and to fight for what is right.**

- Learning through action
- Using creative methods and fun
- Building relationships
- Trying things out
- Critical creative evaluation





**bold** Bringing Out  
Leaders in Dementia



## Evaluation Methodology



- Creative, embodied, reflexive, qualitative
- Flexible and evolving
- Encourage a deep level of imaginative thought or complex recollection of events
- Person-centred and led by partners
- Framed by the 'Elements of Human Flourishing' (McCormack & McCance 2015)

## Outcome (so far) What is a BOLD Social Leader?

This is someone who:

- Makes a difference in their community
- Develops the skills to influence their communities.
- Demonstrates the four core bold values; showing love, showing character, being creative and being bold.
- Wants to flourish and help others to flourish.
- **BOLDly** find ways to join with others to make a difference through creating spaces for everyone to flourish in different ways.
- Finds different ways to curate, share and tell their story to influence social change

Sensitive power  
Courageous and inclusive  
A place for us all





I feel I need to  
forget what I know  
about dementia, and  
remember what I  
know about people



Vina

# A Whole-systems Approach to Developing Person-centred Cultures

(adapted from McCormack & McCance 2017)

- Pay attention to all parts of the system that contribute to creating healthful cultures
- Know the boundaries of individuals' & build a team of complementary persons
- Provide health-supporting services for everyone's well-being
- Develop employment models that reflect individual need but that together strengthen the whole
- Ensure all care needs are considered significant no matter how small
- Engage in shared collaborative decision-making at all levels and with all persons
- Establish feedback processes that hear all voices
- Facilitate learning in and from practice
- Pay attention to what matters most and let go of what matters less
- Create spaces for stillness and calm
- Strip away 'stupid rules' that don't contribute towards a healthful culture
- Ensure processes are in place to maximise the engagement of staff with their work.



# Leaving a Person Centred Imprint



What imprint do you want to leave on those with whom you connect?