**Nomination for Innovative Contribution to Family Nursing Award:**

**Joel G. Anderson, PhD, CHTP, FGSA**

Dr. Anderson’s innovative contributions to family nursing and family health relate to his leveraging of digital research methods to explore family health and the unique contributions of family nursing. Through this work, family nurses and family health providers can improve development and implementation of family health intervention research globally.

Named one of the Top 20 Nursing Professors on Twitter in 2017, Joel’s professional social media presence continues to increase the reach and impact of his world-first research in family nursing using digital research methods in the field of caregiving in dementia. Dr. Anderson has led an examination of blogs written by family caregivers of people with dementia to characterize the family caregiving experience, offering new, person-centered insights to drive the development and testing of novel interventions and services. The use of these digital methods offers a window into the caregiving experience unmatched by more traditional research methods, allowing him and his colleagues to examine sensitive topics among caregivers, such as suicidal and homicidal ideation, topics that are incredibly important to the field of family nursing. Findings from his paper with colleagues at the University of Exeter on this topic illustrated the prevalence of this issue, lending person-centered information for developing strategies to support the mental health needs of family caregivers. Joel and his colleagues continue this work regarding how and why people with dementia and their families use social media to understand ways in which family nursing and family health researchers might provide support to these families. Dr. Anderson has garnered an international reputation for this social media-focused work that is relevant to family nursing, providing guest lectures and research consultation on digital research methods at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom and the Centre for Medicine and Aging at the University of Stavanger in Norway.

In addition to his use of social media data, Dr. Anderson uses digital research methods to recruit and collect data among populations considered hard to reach or “hidden,” specifically sexual and gender minority caregivers of people with dementia. His work has demonstrated that sexual and gender minority adults more frequently use the Internet to seek health information than their heterosexual counterparts. Taking advantage of this insight, Dr. Anderson’s recent research study funded by the National Institute on Aging used digital methods to collect data via social media-based recruitment targeted toward self-identified sexual and gender minority caregivers of people with dementia. These methods increased accessibility and reduced exclusion of rural caregivers or caregivers with fear of discrimination, thereby broadening the understanding of the sexual and gender minority caregiver experience. Additionally, because social media platforms are used by a diverse population in terms of age, race, and ethnicity, this approach enhanced his team’s ability to recruit a diverse sample, exceeding recruitment goals in terms of race and ethnicity. Findings from the study significantly extend what is known about sexual and gender minority caregivers of people with ADRD, providing unique data about this under-researched population and laying the groundwork for future research to support this caregiving population. As such, Dr. Anderson’s focus on unique populations advance knowledge about families and family health, and continue to grow his international influence and collaborations.

Joel joined the International Family Nursing Association in 2015. Since 2016, he has been a member of the IFNA Communications Committee and currently serves as co-chair, as well as editor of the IFNA blog. With members of the Communications Committee, Dr. Anderson co-presented a workshop on the use of social media to advance family nursing at IFNC13. At IFNC14, Joel led and co-presented a workshop on innovative methods for data collection in family caregiving research, focusing on the use of digital methods to expand family nursing and family health research. Further, in 2020, Joel created and disseminated a social media toolkit to promote the upcoming IFNC15. Following the death of George Floyd in the U.S., Joel provided input to the IFA President regarding the IFNA statement on the influence of racism and disparity on family health. Additionally, Joel has met with the IFNA conference planning and resources committees to share his expertise in hosting and planning a virtual conference, given his background and experience with this. Clearly, Joel demonstrates consistent and impactful actions to further the work of IFNA and family nursing across the globe.

Finally, through his engaged scholarship approach to his program of research, Dr. Anderson is disseminating these innovative research strategies to enhance family nursing and family research, education, and practice through social media and traditional scholarly dissemination. His active presence as a family health scholar on social media ensures that family nursing content spreads globally to a broad and diverse network of professionals and families outside of IFNA. Through his peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, workshops, and media consultations, Dr. Anderson continues to increase awareness among family nurses and family health providers of strategies for leveraging digital methods to expand family nursing theory, research, and practice. And, through his commitment to fostering the training and development of future family nurse scientists and clinicians in using innovative digital platforms as research and practice methods, Joel’s legacy to family nursing is being cemented.

**Selected publications and presentations:**

**Anderson JG**, M Bartmess,\* E Hundt and C Jacelon. “A little bit of their souls”: Investigating the concept of dignity for people living with dementia using caregivers’ blogs. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 2021; 27(1): 43-54*.*

McLennon S, A Davis, S Covington and **JG Anderson**. “At the end we feel forgotten”: Needs, concerns, and advice from blogs of dementia family caregivers. *Clinical Nursing Research*, 2021; 30(1): 82-88.

Talbot CV, ST O’Dwyer, L Clare, J Heaton and **JG Anderson**. How people with dementia use Twitter: A qualitative analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2020; 102:112-119.

**Anderson JG**, E Hundt and KM Rose. Non-pharmacological strategies used by caregivers to support family members with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias as presented in blogs. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing;* 2019; 45(7): 25-35.

**Anderson JG**, E Hundt, M Dean and KM Rose. “A fine line that we walk every day”: Self-care approaches used by family caregivers of persons with dementia. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 2019; 40(3): 252-259.

**Anderson JG**, A Eppes and ST O’Dwyer. “Like death is near”: Expressions of suicidal and homicidal thoughts in the blog posts of family caregivers of people with dementia. *Behavioral Sciences*, 2019; 9(3): pii.E22.

**Anderson JG**, E Hundt, M Dean, J Keim-Malpass and RP Lopez. “The Church of Online Support”: Examining the use of blogs by family caregivers of persons with dementia. *Journal of Family Nursing* 2017; 23:34-54*.*

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