

INTRODUCTION | BACKGROUND

Despite advancements in addiction medicine, nursing practice frequently encounters systemic barriers that impede optimal recovery outcomes. These barriers include, but are not limited to, care discontinuity leading to disrupted therapeutic relationships and diminished treatment adherence, inconsistent application of evidence-based interventions compromising treatment reliability, and a notable deficit in culturally adapted approaches, thereby restricting accessibility for diverse populations and perpetuating health inequities. Collectively, these challenges diminish the overall efficacy of addiction services and contribute to preventable patient distress and relapse. Addressing these multifaceted issues necessitates the development of novel nursing models capable of sustaining holistic, evidence-based, and culturally responsive care across the entire recovery continuum.

OBJECTIVES

Objective: This manuscript introduces the Integrated Recovery-Oriented Nursing (IRON) Care Model, a novel, theoretically grounded framework specifically designed to fortify and optimize nursing practice within the field of addiction rehabilitation. The primary objective of the IRON model is to provide a structured, person-centered approach to care that is both scientifically rigorous and highly responsive to the intricate and evolving needs of individuals actively engaged in the recovery process.

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The Integrated Recovery-Oriented Nursing (IRON) Care Model: A Theoretical Framework for Optimizing Addiction Treatment Outcomes

Muneer, Ahmad; Hessa, ABDEL QADER.

MSc, RN, Maudsley Health, Al Amal Psychiatry Hospital - Emirates Health Services- Dubai, UAE ; Centre For Drug Research, University Sains Malaysia, ORCID numbers <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4434-6268> , 0544007942

MSc, RN, Assistant Nursing Director, Al Amal Psychiatric Hospital, Emirates Health Services, Dubai, United Arab Emirates , ORCID numbers (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6562-2519>)

MATERIALS & METHODS

Methods: The conceptualization and development of the IRON model were rigorously informed by a synthesis of foundational nursing theories, including Orem’s Self-Care Deficit Theory, Watson’s Theory of Human Caring, and Peplau’s Theory of Interpersonal Relations. This theoretical foundation was further integrated with established behavioral change frameworks, such as the Transtheoretical Model and the Biopsychosocial-Spiritual approach, alongside contemporary empirical evidence derived from advanced addiction research.

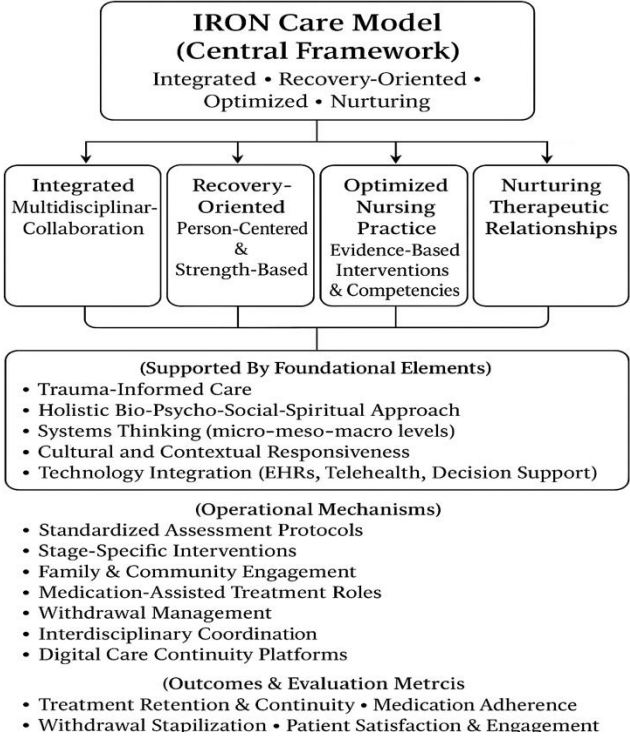
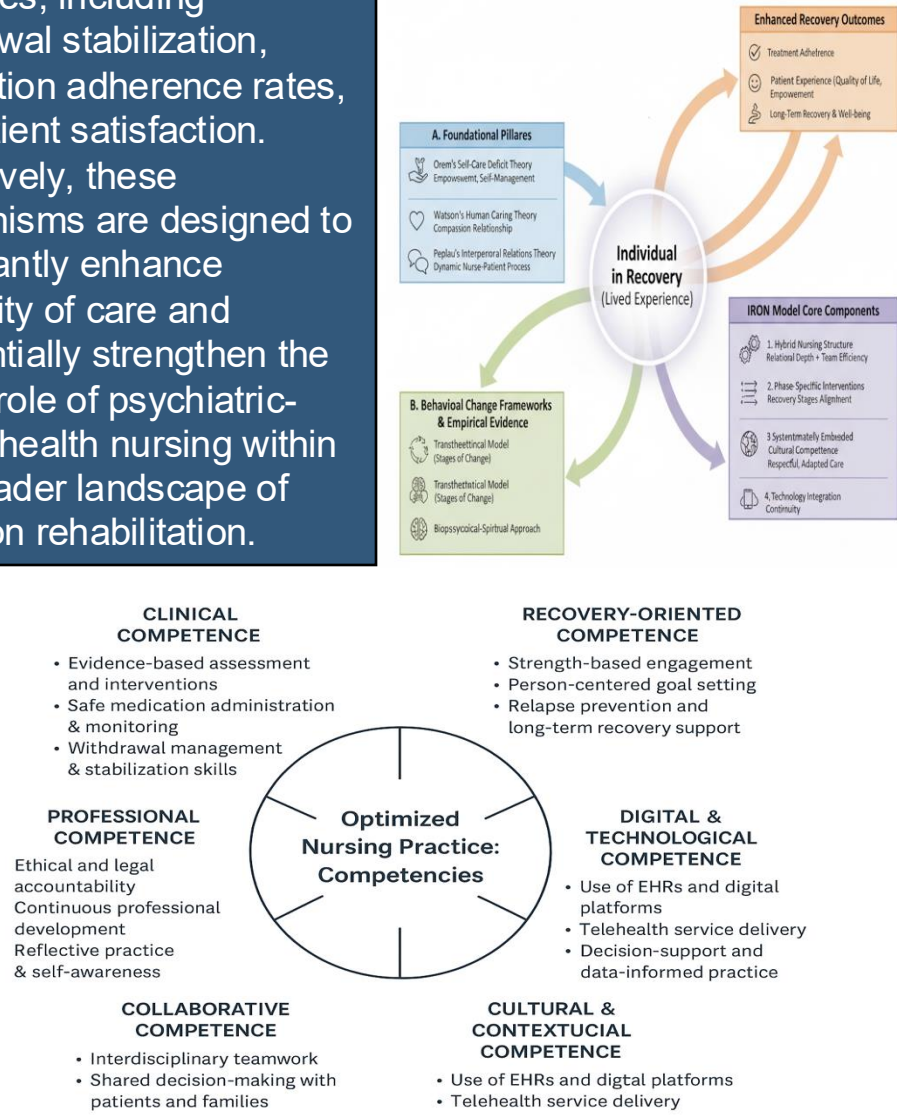
Key Components: The IRON Care Model is delineated into four interconnected core elements: 1) a hybrid nursing care structure that strategically combines the relational depth of primary nursing with the efficiency benefits of team-based care; 2) the implementation of phase-specific interventions meticulously aligned with the distinct stages of the recovery process; 3) the systematic embedding of cultural competence throughout all facets of care delivery; and 4) the strategic integration of advanced technology to enhance clinical decision-making, facilitate seamless communication, and sustain continuity of care across various treatment settings.

RESULTS

Clinical Implications: The operationalization of the IRON model effectively translates recovery-oriented principles into practice through several key mechanisms: the establishment of specialized nursing roles in critical areas such as medication-assisted treatment (MAT) administration, comprehensive withdrawal management, and dedicated family liaison; the standardization of assessment and intervention protocols to ensure consistent application of evidence-based practices; and the systematic measurement of key outcomes, including withdrawal stabilization, medication adherence rates, and patient satisfaction. Collectively, these mechanisms are designed to significantly enhance continuity of care and substantially strengthen the pivotal role of psychiatric-mental health nursing within the broader landscape of addiction rehabilitation.

CONCLUSION

The IRON Care Model presents a comprehensive, compassionate, and evidence-informed framework with substantial potential to improve treatment adherence, optimize the patient experience, and foster superior long-term recovery outcomes in individuals with substance use disorders. Future research endeavors should prioritize the rigorous evaluation of implementation processes, conduct comparative effectiveness studies, and explore the model’s broader impact on overall quality of life for both patients and their families.



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: THE IRON CARE MODEL

