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## Exploring nurses' experiences of caring spinal cord injury patients

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According to statistics compiled by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, accidents were the third most common causes of death in Taiwan in 2016. Approximately 1200 new cases of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) each year are caused by accidents. Spinal cord injury restricts physical activity and hampers physical, mental, and social adaptation.

**Objectives:** This study explored health professionals' experience of caring for patients with spinal cord injury.

**Methods:** The study uses qualitative interpretive phenomenology approach to interview nurses who take care of patients with SCI. Purposive sampling was used to select health professionals as interviewees. The data was collected through one-to-one interview for this study. After the data collection, the use Golaizzi (1978) seven steps are utilized in the data analysis.

**Results:** The five themes emerge from this study: Accident-induced paralysis, acute care for patients, patients' rehabilitation after paralysis, change in family structure, and recommendations based on care experiences. This study revealed that accidents were the primary cause of spinal cord injury, and that nurses may neglect patients' spiritual and social care. Specific case managers should be employed to provide follow-up care for spinal cord injury patients. Additionally, support groups should be used to increase contact between health care professionals and patients, and career guidance should be offered to patients to ensure their sociality.

**Implications for Practice:** For future research, this study suggests to investigate of topics such as a patient's and their Family's post-injury adaption process. In addition, the sexual desire of patients with spinal cord injury requires further exploration.

### Biography

Hong-Shi Ru is a registered nurse for twelve years and a nurse leader in the ward for two years in Tung's hospital, Taiwan. She has just completed her Master degree August, 2018 from Hungkuang University, Taiwan. This presentation is based on her master thesis.

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