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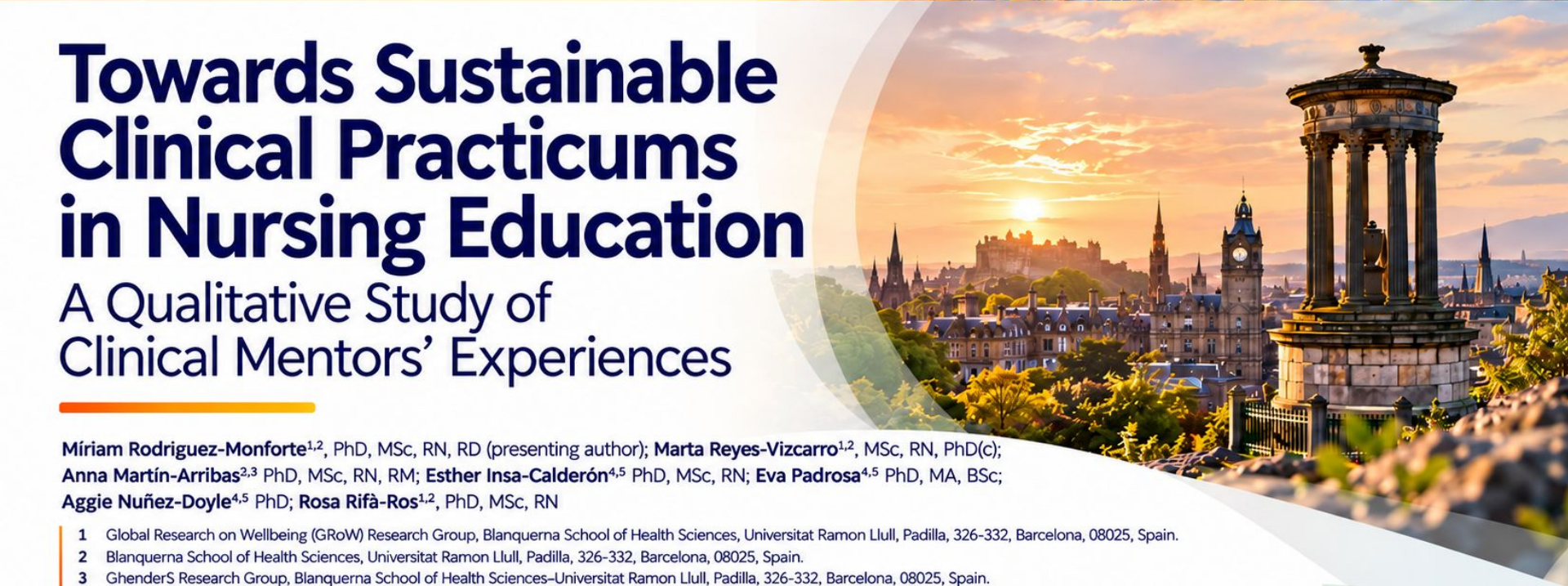
Resilient futures: Transforming nursing and midwifery education for a changing world
1–4 November 2026 | Edinburgh, UK



Towards Sustainable Clinical Practicums in Nursing Education

A Qualitative Study of Clinical Mentors' Experiences



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SUSQUAL Addressing the Challenges to Sustainability and Quality of the Clinical Practicum in Nursing Studies in Spain

Hospital del Mar Escola Superior d'Infermeria Barcelona

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BACKGROUND

The SUSQUAL project

Addressing the challenges to the sustainability and quality of the clinical practicum in nursing studies in Spain.



Clinical learning is essential

Clinical placement is a core component of nursing education, shaping professional competence, identity and future workforce readiness.[1]

Clinical mentorship is under pressure

Mentors face increasing demands from patient care, education and organisational contexts, which challenge the sustainability of high-quality mentorship.[2]

A collaborative and sustainable approach

A sustainable mentorship model requires a shared commitment, including mentor preparation, organisational support and effective collaboration between universities and healthcare institutions.[3]

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2. Escrig-Piñol, A., Padrosa, E., Núñez-Doyle, A., et al. (2026). Clinical practicum under strain: a mixed-methods study protocol for addressing its quality and sustainiability in Spanish nursing education. ***BMJ Open, 16***, e106920. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2025-106920
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Listening to Clinical Mentors



Objective

To explore clinical mentors' experiences and identify factors influencing the sustainability of clinical mentorship.

METHODS

18
clinical mentors interviewed

Qualitative study
Catalonia, Spain

Different healthcare settings
Hospitals | Primary care | Long-term care

Thematic analysis

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RESULTS

Between Commitment and Burden

1 Student characteristics

Student engagement, motivation and initiative shape the mentoring experience.

- Engaged and proactive students enhance the mentoring experience.
- Students' motivation and attitudes influence the quality of the relationship.
- Different levels of preparation and expectations require tailored support.

> *"When the student is motivated and gets involved, it makes all the effort worthwhile."* (Participant 7)

2 Clinical mentor characteristics

Professional motivation and commitment influence how mentors approach their educational role.

- Intrinsic motivation and a sense of responsibility towards students.
- Previous experience and confidence facilitate the mentoring role.
- Personal and professional values, including a commitment to nursing education.

> *"I see it as part of my professional identity; accompanying students is something meaningful for me."* (Participant 11)

3 Impact on clinical practice

Mentorship generates additional workload and emotional demands, but also professional satisfaction and opportunities for reflection.

- Time constraints and workload create tension in daily practice.
- Mentoring can be emotionally demanding, especially in complex situations.
- It also generates professional satisfaction, learning and opportunities for reflection.

> *"It's a balance — it takes time and energy, but it also gives me a lot. I learn from them too."* (Participant 3)

PROFESSIONAL REWARD
Meaning, satisfaction and growth

CLINICAL AND EMOTIONAL BURDEN
Workload, time pressure and emotional demands

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IMPLICATIONS

Sustainability Requires Shared Responsibility

MENTORS

Motivation
Recognition of the educational role and its value.

Professional development
Access to training and learning opportunities.

Wellbeing
Support to manage emotional demands and prevent fatigue.



SUSTAINABLE CLINICAL MENTORSHIP





HEALTHCARE ORGANISATIONS

Recognition
Formal acknowledgement of mentoring as a key professional role.

Workload management
Protected time and resources for educational activities.

Educational support
Policies, resources and leadership to sustain high-quality mentorship.

UNIVERSITIES

Mentor preparation
Training and resources to develop mentoring competencies.

Coordination
Alignment with healthcare partners and clear communication.

Ongoing support
Continuous collaboration, feedback and research.

Sustainable clinical mentorship cannot depend on individual commitment alone.

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Thank you

for your attention!



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Let's connect!

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