

# Exploration of the concept of self-care and implications for nurses

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Worldwide, the increasing prevalence of chronic disease evokes concern on a number of levels, including quality of life, health care costs and workforce issues to meet increasing demands on services. One response has been a shift in governmental health policy to encourage greater involvement of the chronically ill individual in their healthcare through participation in self-care programmes. Embedded in self-care programmes is the underlying concept of self-care, a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. The purpose of this study is reviews the factors and underlying theoretical perspectives that have contributed to current knowledge regarding the concept of self-care and implications for nurses.

**Material and Method:** This paper is a review article that based on collecting data from electronic sources (MEDLINE) and published from 2000 to 2010 research related to the topic.

**Results:** Many definitions of self-care exist and a consensual definition has not been reached. The current concept of self-care has been shaped by many different social, economic and political factors and is embedded in diverse theoretical perspectives and paradigms.

**Conclusion:** An understanding of the underlying theoretical perspectives and paradigm embedded within acute and chronic disease management will facilitate nurses' engagement in the debate, practice within appropriate ethical boundaries and support individuals, families and communities more effectively in managing chronic disease.

**Keywords:** Chronic diseases, Nurses, Self-care