

# The role of nurses in teleconsultation: a grounded theory study

*David Barrett*

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# Background and context



- Teleconsultation is the use of real-time video to support the delivery of healthcare
- Used in a variety of clinical contexts – notably acute stroke assessment and prisons healthcare
- Used to overcome barriers related to;
  - Geography
  - Logistics
  - Centralisation of specialist services

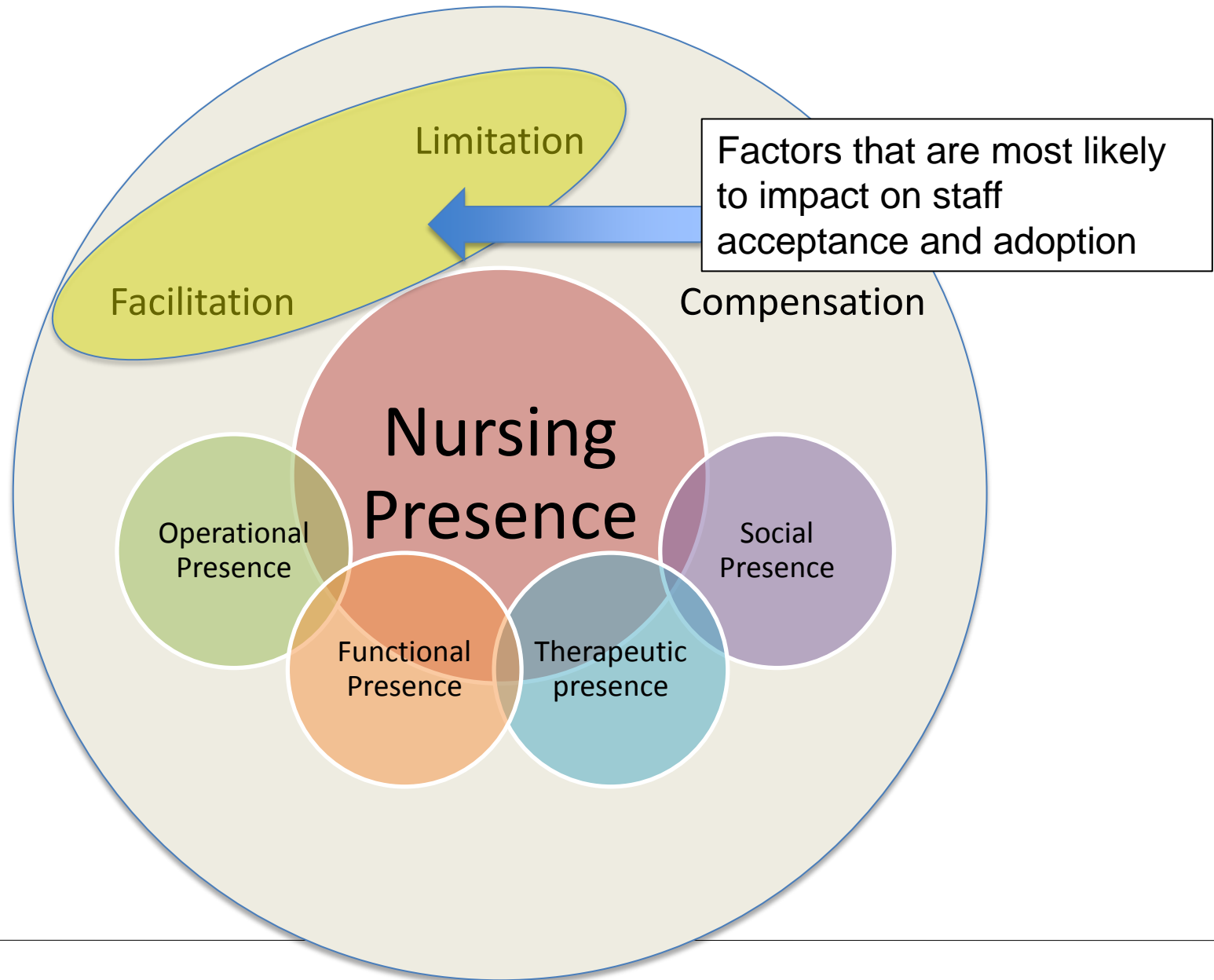
# The research question



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**What is the role of nurses in using teleconsultation to support healthcare?**



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## Barriers to acceptance

- Technophobia - *“I’m not very IT literate, so it has been a steep learning curve for me”*
  - Technical difficulties – *“the smallest problems are enough to act as really powerful barriers”*
  - Lack of physical proximity – *“there is nothing to replace a cuddle. You know, a reassuring hand around the back.”*
  - Additional workload – *“...it does take longer to do...”*
  - Clinical pathways, processes and environment not designed to incorporate TC – *“...one of the problems has been actually finding a place to do it”*
  - Role anxiety - *“...some really don’t like to do it. They would much rather be out there ‘hands on’ with the patient...”*
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## Drivers of acceptance

- Mainly focused on ‘value-add’ over the telephone;
    - Increased richness of communication – “*you feel properly involved*”
    - Ability to use two-way non-verbal communication – “*you do pick up on the non-verbal cues*”
    - Ability to carry out visual assessment of patient and environment - “*...we can see whether they are caring for themselves*”
  - Recognition of user, carer and organisational benefit – “*we are able to offer a lot more clinic appointments*”
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## Conclusions

- Though focused on a different application of technology, the study highlights similar factors affecting adoption as those in the MALT study
  - Reliable and easy-to-use technology can support acceptance; sub-optimal or faulty equipment provides a powerful barrier
  - Concerns regarding the lack of physical proximity and ability to touch were raised by a number of participants
  - Clear recognition of benefits will support acceptance and adoption
  - Personal animosity towards (or fear of) technology should not be overlooked as a barrier to adoption
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