

Rachael Carroll

The Health Care Assistant-
Registered Nurse Dyad;
a new concept of team

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Personal history

- Mental health nurse – 24 years
- MSc Management and Leadership 2012 – Sheffield Hallam
- New challenge – Research fellow
- De Montfort University, Leicester
- Adult wards
- PhD opportunity
- HCAs – Band 2

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Background

- **Role – washes, feeding, pressure area monitoring, clinical observations, other nursing support**
- **Wards - four bays, a central nurses station, side rooms, etc**
- **HCA based in a bay with a RN for the 12.5 hour shift**

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Context

- Over 400,000 'HCA' s in the UK
- 59% work in an acute general hospital (Unison 2018)
- HCAs provide over 60% of “hands-on care” (Willis 2015)

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Background

- HCAs not waiting for each consecutive instruction ...
- ... **autonomous?**
- Not able to explain how they knew what to do

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Methodology

- **Ethnography – a study of people and culture**
- **Focused on role of the HCA**
- **4 wards in 1 hospital**
 - 2 assessment and 2 medical

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Method

- **Observations followed immediately by interviews**
- **148 hours observations.**
- **108 interviews.**

Intrigued

- Bays restricted their ability to work as a whole nursing team

I asked her how she felt about being part of a team and she said “well, the nurse I am working with today...” (Field notes)

Dyad; a team of two
people
(the smallest team possible)

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Findings

- Shared team goal

HCA-RN Dyad

- Form
- Function

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HCA-RN Dyad;

Form

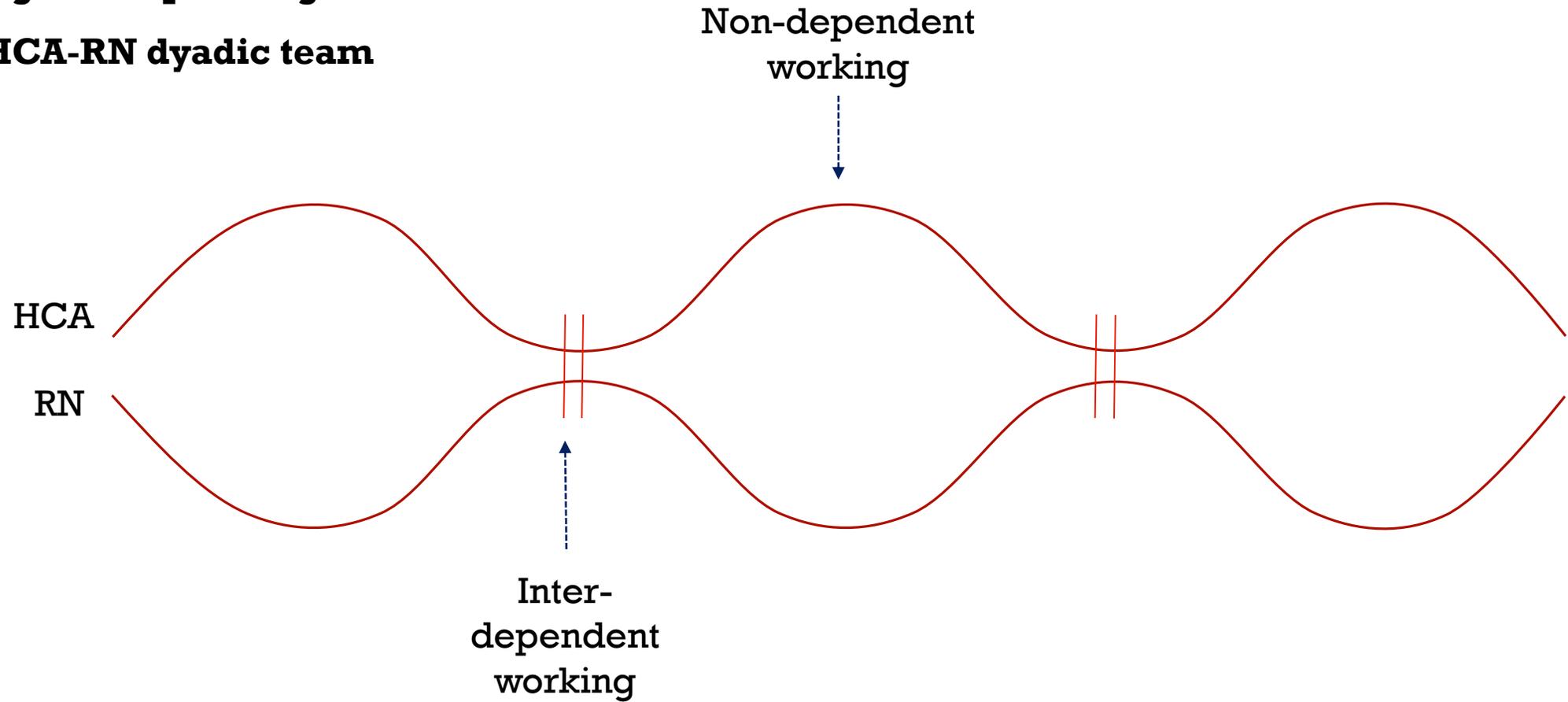
- Pre-shift preconceptions and 'gelling'
- Hierarchical differences
- Physical isolation
- Concentrated relationships

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HCA-RN Dyad Function

- **Joining and separating;**
 - **Non-dependent working**
 - **Inter-dependent working**

Joining and Separating as a HCA-RN dyadic team



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Non-dependent working

- Routine scaffolding
 - compulsory timed tasks,
 - mandatory flexible tasks,
 - RN requested tasks
- Relies upon RN trust

Routine Scaffolding

Beginning of shift

Fills gaps between compulsory timed tasks

Mandatory flexible task

Mandatory flexible task

4 hrs

RN requested

8 hrs

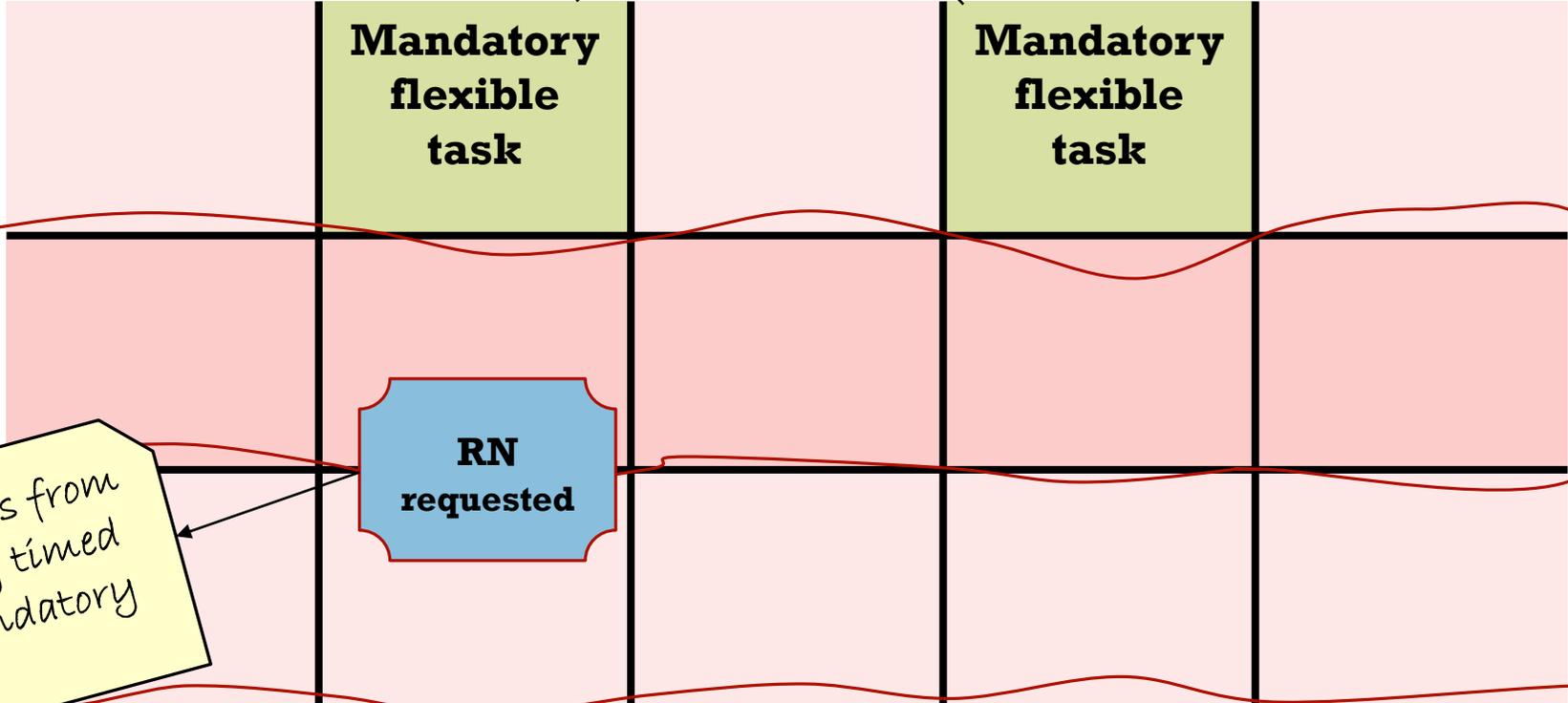
Compulsory timed tasks

12.5 hrs

End of shift

Small diversions from the compulsory timed tasks and Mandatory flexible tasks

Poles that provide the shift structure - can not be moved/omitted



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Inter- dependent working

- **Exchangeable and distinguishable roles**
- **Holding 'mini-meetings'**
- **Beholden to the RN – asking a peer, escalating, doing it alone**
- **Searching for equity**

HCA-RN Dyad; Function

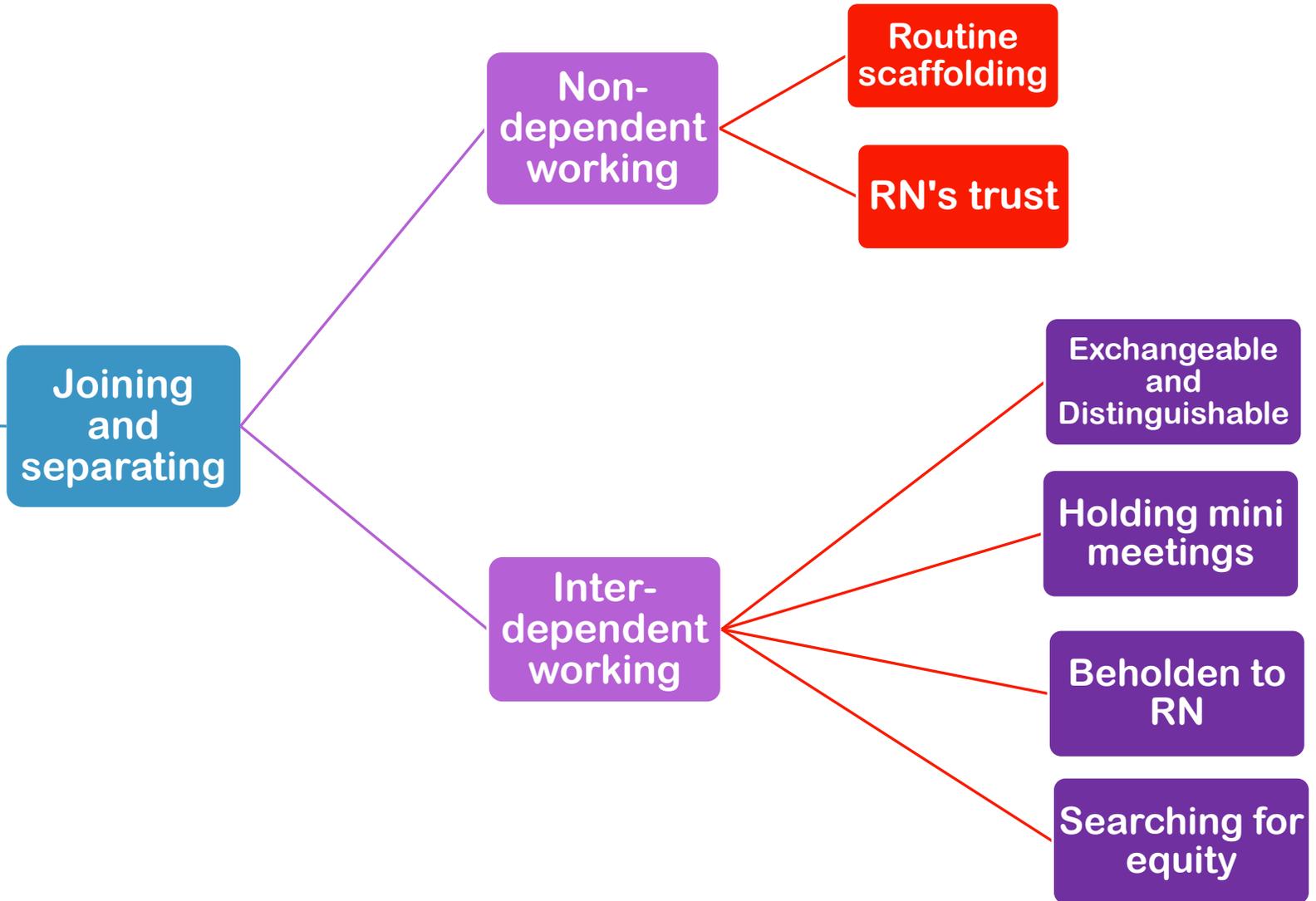
HCA-RN Dyad; Form

pre-shift
preconceptions and
gelling

hierarchical
differences,

physical isolation,

concentrated
relationships



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Summary

- HCA - the nursing team = RN that on that shift – **dyad**
- **Joined and separated** to work non-dependently and inter-dependently
- A successful dyadic team completed all of their work on time with no omissions.

Conclusion?

- **Recognise the contribution of the HCA; the vital, intertwined team member to the RN**
- **The next story - Introduction of Nursing Associate - A triad??**

Questions

Thank you

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