

Title: Exploring Health Seeking Behaviours of Liberians with Diabetes: A Critical Hermeneutic Study**Author:** Paulina Bleah, MN, NP-PHC, PhD Candidate**Academic Institution:** Queen's University, PhD in Nursing, 2nd Year Doctoral Candidate (Proposal Writing Phase)

Background: Diabetes is on the rise in Liberia. It is a serious public health threat – where an estimated 5.6% of the population of 5.2 million are living with the disease⁵. Liberians with diabetes experience significant challenges in regard to accessing social, economic and healthcare resources to manage their illness². As a result, they have had to utilize numerous services, of varying quality, including hospitals, clinics, traditional healers and street drug sellers to meet their health needs^{1,2}. There is no research to date that has explored the experiences of seeking care for individuals with diabetes in Liberia.

Purpose: The purpose of this research study is to explore health seeking behaviours and how it is (re)shaping the experience of living with diabetes in the Liberian context.

Research Question: The central research question is: how do adults with diabetes experience seeking care in the Liberian context?

Methodology: Critical hermeneutics is the methodological approach that will guide this research study. As a cultural insider, I will use critical hermeneutics to interpret participants experiences with explicit consciousness of the power relations involved³. Through purposeful sampling, 8 to 10 adults with diabetes will be recruited from Liberia to participate in the study. Photovoice is the method that will be used to collect data, wherein participants will be provided cameras to photograph their experience of seeking care in the context of living with diabetes – documenting both the challenges and successes⁴.

Implications for Nursing: The findings from this study will inform nurses on the reasons people seek care and what questions they are trying to answer when they seek out different types of care. With that understanding, nurses can better advocate for patients with diabetes and challenge current standards of care, for the purposes of improving the health experience and clinical outcomes for people with diabetes in Liberia.

Word count: 300**References:**

¹Kruk et al., (2011); ²Ministry of Health and Welfare of Liberia (2011); ³VanLeeuwen et al.,
⁴Wang et al., (1997); ⁵World Health Organization (2016)