
Abstract
This study used principles and methods of good ecological restoration, including participatory photographic research methods, to explore perceptions of safety and quality in one hemodialysis unit. Using a list of potential safety and quality issues developed during an initial focus group, a practitioner-led photo walkabout was conducted to obtain photographs of the patient care unit and nurses’ stories (photo narration) about safety and quality in their environment. Following a process of iterative coding, photos were used to discuss preliminary themes in a photo elicitation focus group with four additional unit staff. The major themes identified related to clutter, infection control, unit design, chemicals and air quality, lack of storage space, and health and safety hazards (including wet floors, tripping hazards from hoses, moving furniture/chairs). The visual methods engaged researchers and unit nurses in rich dialogue about safety in this complex environment and provides an ongoing basis for monitoring and enhancing safety.