

Seminar Series

A Touch of Empathy

**Martina Kelly, Associate Professor &
Director of Undergraduate Family
Medicine, Cumming School of
Medicine, University of Calgary, Alberta**



Patients of empathic physicians have improved clinical outcomes and learning how to communicate empathically with patients is a central aim of medical training. In addition to verbal communication, nonverbal communication skills (NVCS) are essential to convey emotional and affective communication. NVCS include attention to body language, use of space and gestures, such as touch. Although many medical interactions involve touch, it is relatively unexplored as a form of nonverbal communication in medical practice. Martina will present findings from a phenomenological study on physicians' experience communicating with touch. Data indicate touch plays an important role in nonverbal communication between physicians and patients, particularly to express empathy. Findings will be considered in relation to phenomenological insights of empathy afforded by Edith Stein, Merleau-Ponty, and Zahavi's work on intersubjectivity.

Martina is a family doctor, and associate professor, at the Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. She oversees family medicine teaching within a three year medical school, which encourages half of graduates to choose a career in family medicine. She is interested in embodiment, the role of the senses in learning and how phenomenology can inform theoretical approaches to teaching and learning relationship centred care.

**1-2pm, Wednesday 29 May 2019
seminar room 1.45, Ridley building 2**

[Register a place here](#) or email sarah.carey@ncl.ac.uk.