

Role of the Library in Evidence-Based Practice

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Problem: Many nurses have little or no experience with identifying the best sources of evidence needed to resolve clinical practice questions.

Evidence: Studies, such as the one recently published in the *American Journal of Nursing*, show that a majority of nurses are not confident of their ability to locate the best evidence available on clinical practice questions. As in many other professions, asking a trusted colleague is the way that nurses frequently get need information, rather than going directly to sources of evidence-based literature, such as PubMed or CINAHL. Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nurses polled in this study had never received any kind of instruction in searching the research literature.

Strategy: Through collaboration with key nursing personnel, we identified critical educational points to promote effective identification of research materials, thereby supporting the incorporation of evidence into clinical practice.

Practice Change: Librarians now regularly do instruction on the effective use of information resources for selected nursing groups, such as the Staff Nurse Evidence-Based Practice Fellowship and the Clinical Practice Committee. Librarians also provide assistance in research specific clinical practice questions.

Evaluation: The evaluation done to date has been informal. The effectiveness of the practice change has been evaluated based on the changes in the ability of target audiences to effectively identify sources of evidence and efficiently search them for relevant studies.

Results: Instruction in information resources aids nurses in incorporating evidence into their practice by giving them the tools they need to identify quality sources of evidence. Nurses are able to more easily identify relevant studies, therefore freeing up their time to be spent in the actual evaluation and incorporation of research into their practice. Nurses are more confident that they have identified all of the information they need to make informed decisions in both their practice and in doing their own research.

Recommendations: Consider collaborating with librarians in identifying the best information resources and most efficient and effective search strategies for finding relevant research to incorporate into practice.

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