

Teaching Evidence-Based Practice: Application of the Ace Star Model in an Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum

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Problem: Nurses in the United States are not prepared for evidence-based practice (EBP). In a recent study, Pravikoff, Tanner and Pierce (2005) found that nurses in the United States do not value the use of research in practice. Furthermore, they found that 76% of nurses surveyed had never searched CINAHL and 58% had never searched MEDLINE. In order to better understand and value research evidence, baccalaureate nursing students must be taught the fundamentals of the evidence-based practice process.

Strategy: In lieu of applied research projects, senior nursing students were instructed to follow the ACE Star Model of Knowledge Transformation to address a clinical question or issue. The EBP project requirements (following the 5 steps of the ACE Star Model) will be discussed.

Practice Change: Several EBP student projects will be discussed. Examples of evidence-based practice change suggested by student work include rationale to support the following: documentation at the bedside in the acute care setting, Medical Emergency Teams, male circumcision, breastfeeding, vaccination for Human Papillomavirus and prayer.

Evaluation: End-of-course evaluations were utilized to evaluate the students' experience. Qualitative feedback related to student understanding of EBP were analyzed before and after the project. Poster presentations were evaluated by faculty members.

Results: End-of-course evaluations revealed that overall the students felt that this type of approach to teaching research represented a more applicable and valuable experience than an applied research project. These results will be discussed.

Recommendations: Baccalaureate nursing students should be encouraged to follow the EBP process to address clinical problems. The ACE Star Model of Knowledge Transformation is a tool that can ground student projects to teach the elements of EBP.

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