

## **Integrating Evaluation into a Nursing Evidence-Based Practice Project**

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**Problem:** Evaluation is a critical factor in assessing the success of an evidence-based practice (EBP) project or change. Collecting measurable and useful data to evaluate outcomes is a challenge, and often, a neglected component in the process. The ability to address this issue was an important consideration for an EBP nursing committee faced with the task of revising the list of nursing diagnosis in the electronic medical records. The ultimate goal of the project was to utilize standardized nursing terminology to incorporate an evidence-based nursing approach to patient care planning. In addition, the committee planned to streamline the nurses' electronic care planning process to improve usability and increase staff satisfaction.

**Evidence:** A literature search was conducted to obtain information on approaches to project and outcome evaluation. Publications related to implementation of nursing diagnosis, use of standardized nursing language, and nurse care planning in electronic records were retrieved and reviewed. Support was identified for use of standardized nursing terminology-- North American Nursing Diagnosis Association (NANDA), Nursing Intervention Classification (NIC), and Nursing Outcome Classification (NOC), in electronic health records and in acute care settings. Instruments specific to meet evaluation needs were not found. Action research and pre- and post-implementation questionnaires were identified as useful methodological approaches to evaluate outcomes for this project.

**Strategy:** Strategy included the development of an instrument to obtain pre- and post-implementation data from staff. Questions included in the instrument were developed based on the literature review, needs assessment for the EBP project, and the goals the committee wanted to accomplish. Staff nurses on the committee provided input on the item development. Information technology, professional practice, and research experts were asked to review and provide suggestions to improve instrument content validity. Two open-ended questions were incorporated to encourage input from staff nurses. Additionally, they were provided direct contact to the committee via intra-facility e-mail, and encouraged to provide ongoing feedback post-implementation.

**Practice Change:** In reality, the practice change was implementation of the revised list for nursing care planning in the electronic records utilizing standardized languages, NANDA, NIC, and NOC. Integrated into the process were methods to measure staff perceptions and an opportunity to encourage feedback for ongoing improvements to the practice change.

**Results:** The EBP Nursing Committee obtained useful information from the end-users including identification of barriers and suggestions for improvement. Measurable outcomes resulted in numbers and graphics that provided visual pictures of outcomes to staff and leadership.

**Recommendations:** Include outcome evaluation as part of the initial EBP project planning process. Seek established instruments and data collection methods to aid in collecting data. When not available, develop questionnaires and surveys specific to the project, utilizing information from the EBP project needs assessment, literature review and outcome objectives.

Solicit input from stakeholders, clinical and academic experts, and staff. The data generated specific to evaluating outcomes of the project make it worth the extra time invested in the process