

Evidence-Based Practice Strategies for Nursing and Health Care

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Participants: 30

Evidence-based nursing has evolved into the standard for nursing practice—the hallmark of excellence in clinical practice—and it is therefore imperative that all nurses have a working knowledge of the principles and methods by which their practice can be driven by credible, scientifically verified, and clinically relevant evidence rather than authority, trial and error, intuition, or other common ways of knowing. Nursing knowledge is derived from three primary sources: ethical principles, practice wisdom (clinical expertise), and scientific knowledge derived from research.

Translational research includes: 1) the process of applying discoveries generated during research in the laboratory, and in preclinical studies, to the development of trials and studies in humans; and 2) research aimed at enhancing the adoption of best practices in the community.



This second application is the focus of nursing science as it relates to evidence-based practice. Science, as a way of knowing, while basic to the practice of professional nursing, is often undervalued and under-learned.

A nursing elective course was implemented, placing students with nurse researchers in one of two clinical settings. Clinical protocol development and implementation of translational research to advance evidence-based practice was the focus of the discipline-specific research activities. Students were either assigned to Project Link (the grant-supported College of Nursing initiative to expand access to health care to uninsured workers in Lowndes County through collaboration with the Partnership Health Clinic) or to the research projects that are part of the nurse faculty consultation services provided to South Georgia Medical Center.

Students were engaged in a research literature review, analysis, and prioritization based on specific clinical problems. Students generated evidence-based clinical questions and participated in collaboration with nurses and other health care professionals involved in clinical research projects to evaluate the impact of Project Link, to establish an evidence-based practice model for Project Link, and to study clinical problems such as best protocols for nurse managed alcohol withdrawal care and cancer survivorship variables. They also had the opportunity to share their work and the project outcomes in presentation formats that included posters, podium presentations, oral and written reports to committees, and publications.

The outcomes of this project include: increased skills in qualitative and quantitative data collection specific to nurse-sensitive quality indicators, increased positive attitude toward research and research roles for nurses, and increased interest in graduate nursing education.