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Bridging the Gap: An Innovative Web-Based Approach for Evaluating EBP Readiness in Direct Care Nurses

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BACKGROUND

Universal & equitable access to safe & effective healthcare emphasized in *The 2012 World Health Report*, 'no health without research': Endpoints need to go beyond publication outputs, has forwarded the global evidence-based practice (EBP) movement. (Zachariah et al., 2011)

Significance

- Lindeman (1975) identified research utilization & quality improvement as nursing priorities over forty years ago.
- Current literature suggests research findings may take seventeen years to reach practice integration. (Morris et al., 2011)
- Direct care nurses identify lack of resources, time, & critical appraisal skills to navigate current literature as among reasons for not implementing EBP into practice. (Yoder et al., 2014)

PURPOSE

Organizations are challenged to overcome these barriers to implementing & adopting research findings into nursing practice.

Aim

Nurse leaders sought to identify direct care nurse self-perception of evidence-based readiness & knowledge to guide data-driven EBP knowledge & skill development in employed nurses.

Purpose

Evaluate the self-perception of evidence-based readiness & knowledge of front-line nurse as a first step in developing a focused approach to improving EBP knowledge & skill in two acute care hospitals & one long term care hospital located in the southwestern region of the United States.

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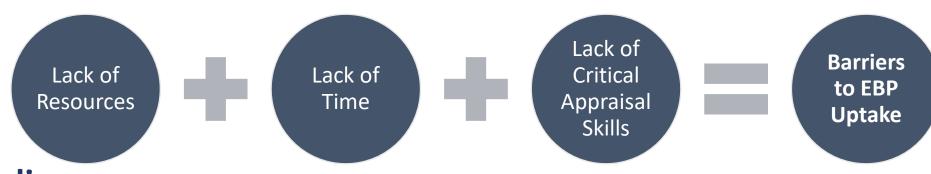
METHODS

Design

Cross-sectional exploratory descriptive design

Measurement Tools

- Stevens EBP Readiness Inventory & EBP Knowledge Assessment questionnaires were used to assess direct care nurses' self-reported evidenced-based readiness & baseline EBP knowledge.
  - Stevens EBP Readiness Inventory (ERI)
    - Likert-style 20 question instrument
    - Questions had been tested for reliability & validity
  - EBP knowledge assessment questionnaire
    - Likert-style 15 question instrument
    - Questions had been tested for reliability & validity (Stevens, 2013)
- Research skill measured by four questions adapted from Research Readiness Self- Assessment tool (Ivanitskaya, et al. 2006; Ivanitskaya, et al. 2012)
- Participants accessed surveys online via the EBR© Tool

Lack of Resources **+** Lack of Time **+** Lack of Critical Appraisal Skills **=** Barriers to EBP Uptake

Sampling

Convenience sample of registered nurses (RNs) working Covenant Medical Center, Covenant Children's Hospital, & Covenant Long Term Acute Care facilities.

Recruitment

Direct care RNs recruited by researchers at staff meetings & during rounding on each unit on both day & night shifts over three weeks.

Consent

- Informed consent was obtained from (N=49) RNs volunteering to participate.
- Survey questionnaires were administered online to study participants working on 22 nursing units during a three week period in May 2018.

LIMITATIONS

- Sample was voluntary with minimal nurse participation.
- Connectivity issues at study site limited ability to access and/or complete study.

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- Highest **level of skill** & **self-confidence** measured context of "Use & implementation of clinical practice guidelines" (n=4)
- Highest **perceived EBP readiness** measured context of "deliver care using evidence-based clinical practice guidelines" (M=4.5; SD=1.55)
- Highly rated **EBP assessment** findings included
  - "use of agency-adopted clinical practice guidelines" (M=4.29; SD=1.60)
  - "choose evidence-based approaches over routine as a base for own clinical decision making" (M=4.2; SD=1.60)
- Lowest **EBP readiness & knowledge** included
  - "major facets to be assessed when using clinical practice guidelines" (M=2.77; SD=1.18)
  - "ability to identify statistics commonly used in evidence summaries" (M=2.96; SD=1.18)
  - "ability to conduct expert search strategies using pre-constructed strategies in major databases" (M=2.67; SD=1.21)

Research Readiness Results

- Overall research skills were rated as average to good (M=3.38; SD=1.00)
- 59% (n=20) identified peer-reviewed journals as source for scholarly information
- Online research skills were identified as area needing the most improvement (41.2%; n=14); specifically **(1) where to begin searching for evidence, (2) how to narrow down a literature search, & (3) targeted online search skills**
- Nine (26.5%) indicated knowing the steps & how to plan a literature search.
- Six nurses (17.6%) reported knowing how to evaluate credibility & reliability of research results & reports.
- Three nurses (8%) stated they needed to increase their confidence & comfort level with online research.

FURTHER RESEARCH/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Data from reliable & validated tools may be used to focus organizational efforts to improve employment of EBP skills at the point of care.
- Adoption & acceptance of research concepts by nurses remains integral to integration of evidence into clinical practice.

CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

- Strengthening nurse online search skills would close the gap in knowledge & practice for this sample of RNs. Education was customized for nurses based on findings.
- High levels of self-confidence for using EBP to implement & deliver care using clinical practice guidelines was reported.
- Knowledge & self-efficacy deficits with use of advanced EBP skills were noted.