

## Leadership Connection 2018 (15-18 September)

### Starting a Nurse Researcher Program on a Shoestring Budget

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Developing an environment that allow frontline nurses to engage in scholarly efforts which include evidence-based practice (EBP), research opportunities, and quality improvement efforts requires innovative ideas and leadership skills. Health care institutions along with acute care settings are investigating methods for integrating inquisitive thinking gateways that allow the nursing staff to embrace dynamic investigation leading to best practices. These institutions are encountering challenges on how to instigate a program such as a nurse researcher program within the financial constraints being encountered within the health care arena. Wilson, Banner, Austria, and Wilson (2017) stated that mainstreaming advances and/or EBP project within a clinical venue must provide steps to adjust the findings to that identifiable clinical audience while considering the organizational culture. While programs can be envisioned and initiated, sustaining and advancing the process becomes imperative for enhancing patient safety aspects. EBP and research efforts are becoming increasingly sophisticated which results in further need to develop the individuals associated with the process.

According to Breckenridge-Sproat and colleagues (2015), documents provided by the Institute of Medicine challenged the health environment to improve the patient care outcomes in the American healthcare delivery system. While this challenge was delivered, small community hospitals face a substantial hardship trying to develop a mature nursing research environment (Johantgen, et al, 2017). Magnet size hospitals have additional resources to use when trying to augment the evidence-based practice and research components into the fabric of customary provision of healthcare. Small community hospitals and other health care agencies encounter unique challenges when seeking to move into this world of scholarly endeavors and evidence confirmation.

Many strategies have been considered when hospital-based nursing research programs are being developed. Strategies such as mentorships, clear differentiation of expectations, leadership approaches, resources, and training (Albert, 2016; Drenkard, 2013; Johantgen et al, 2017; Sellars & Mayo, 2013; Wilson et al, 2013) must be carefully and thoughtfully considered to advance a culture of inquisitive thinking which includes EBP, research, and quality improvement for frontline nurses. Frontline nurses perceive many obstacles such as administrative support issues, time commitments, lack of knowledge, and barriers to resources which must be conquered for a culture of inquisitive thinking to be successful. Leaders such as the chief nursing officer, senior nurse leader, nurse researcher, and nursing management must all be "on tract" with the program for the frontline nurses to be willing to engage in the process (Drenkard, 2013; Sellars & Mayo, 2013). McLaughlin and colleagues (2013) suggested a prototype for hospital-based nursing research programs which included dedicated nursing research mentor/leader, nurses as principal investigators, policies/procedures, research education/training, and scholarly outcomes. Each of these aspects is important within the consideration for developing an environment for analytical and searching cultures within any setting. Nurses must be allowed to question and test innovative and creative measures if health care is to expand and cultivate pioneering approaches to meet the health care needs of the changing population. Application of these strategies along with recommendations related to the barriers must be carefully considered when looking at the widening variety of health care venues.

This presentation will provide an open discussion of strategies and obstacles to consider when an agency is considering the initiation of an agency-based nursing research program. Each strategy and obstacle will be carefully presented with application thoughts related to a variety of health care venues. Each venue is unique; thus, thought and consideration related to these different environments must be included for a program to be sustainable. Breckenridge and colleagues (2015) acknowledged the need for individuals to commit to the idea of a culture of EBP and inquisitive thinking for the enduring sustainability

of a program. Without the unified allegiance by individuals, a nurse researcher program becomes an obligation instead of an opportunity.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

EBP/Research Utilization, Hospital-based nursing research program and Nurse Researcher program

**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

This presentation provides a straightforward dialogue of strategies and obstacles to contemplate when considering the instigation of an agency-based nursing research program. Strategies and obstacles will be offered with application ideas which could be used in a variety of venues.

**Content Outline:**

A. By the end of the presentation, the participant will be able to discuss components needed within an agency-based nursing research program.

1. Overview of components used in hospital-based nursing research programs.
2. Aspects driving the development of nursing research programs and activities
3. Key ideas which need to be considered when initiating a scholarly program

B. By the end of the presentation, the participant will be able to identify strategies that could be used in an agency-based nursing research program.

1. Strategies used within established program
2. Literature/evidence available concerning strategies to consider in a program

C. By the end of the presentation, the participant will be able to evaluate obstacles and management tactics for use in an agency-based nursing research program.

1. Barriers/obstacles which could be encountered

2. Tactics for overcoming

D. Summary of the ideas presented

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**Professional Experience:** In the past five years, I have spoken at a variety of International/National Conferences such as Sigma Theta Tau International in Brisbane, Australia, NLN Summit 2002 in Anaheim, California, and 9th Annual Conference: Primary Care for the Underserved in Detroit, Michigan. Topics of presentations have ranged from healthcare literacy research, how to write and get abstracts accepted and collaborative interdisciplinary education projects. In addition to presentations, I have taught undergraduate research courses, undergraduate courses, undergraduate teaching courses, and graduate courses. I have had extensive experience converting these courses to online delivery methods. Manuscripts have resulted from each of the above presentations and other topics.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Boswell speaks at numerous conferences. She has published on healthcare literacy, online teaching, mentoring, and research. She has been an educator for more than 10 years, working at multiple levels Dr. Boswell is a strong advocate for effective faculty and peer mentoring. She is currently on the faculty at the school of nursing at Texas Tech University HSC.