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Empowering Nurses to Become EBP Experts and Lifelong Learners

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Today's healthcare environment is highly complex and challenging for clinicians in all disciplines. To thrive, nurses must possess knowledge and skill in a myriad of clinical and human sciences; as well as, a highly developed level of emotional intelligence. Therefore, every RN is professionally responsible for keeping up-to-date and evidence-based in their area of Nursing practice and specialization. Learning to become an expert in evidence-based practice (EBP) empowers nurses to become lifelong learners and effective problem-solvers by applying high quality scientific findings to practice problems. EBP nurse experts demonstrate professional maturity. They perceive clinical problems as opportunity for improvement and challenges to be solved.

In 2015, a newly appointed Nurse Researcher identified frustration among clinical nurses in their ability to get various issues resolved on their units within a community hospital. Subsequently, the researcher conducted an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Learning Needs Assessment among the 650 RNs working throughout the organization. Findings indicated that less than 50% of nurses possessed novice-level EBP knowledge and skills. New graduate nurses believed that they possessed EBP knowledge and basic skills, but lacked actual experience conducting EBP projects. Experienced nurses expressed the need to attain both EBP knowledge and basic skills (Problem Identification, Literature Search, Basic Statistics and Data Management, etc.) before they would feel comfortable participating in EBP Projects. All of the nurses felt inadequate to lead the development and implementation of EBP Projects as a problem-solving approach to identified problems in the work environment. In response, the Nurse Researcher collaborated with the Nursing Statistician and Librarian to develop a series of EBP classes, seminars, tutorials and other activities. Patricia Benner’s Model of Skills Acquisition in Nursing serves as the conceptual framework for this ongoing EBP educational program. Nurses in all roles and from all clinical specialties receive EBP education and skills development from orientation as a newly hired RNs and on a regular basis as they advance their professional career. Enthusiasm has increased as the EBP Educational Program has developed over the past two years. The fact that the organization is Magnet-designated, and many nurses are enrolled in formal BSN, Master and Doctoral Programs, serves as impetus for nurse colleagues to participate in Knowledge Translation through participation in scholarly EBP endeavors. Since the beginning of the program, over 65 meaningful EBP Projects have been conducted. Many of the projects identified and improved patient safety issues, heretofore unidentified via standard quality improvement methods.

Developing nurses’ EBP knowledge and skill promotes lifelong learning and effective problem solving. Furthermore, EBP mastery develops RNs into mature professionals, empowered to provide up-to-date, high quality nursing care. Nurses who demonstrate expertise in EBP know that the high quality care they provide to patients improves quality outcomes, advances Nursing Science and promotes the profession of Nursing as leaders in the reformation of healthcare in the 21st century.

Title:
Empowering Nurses to Become EBP Experts and Lifelong Learners

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Abstract Summary:
Discover innovative methods used by a Nurse Research to educate nurses from all levels of a healthcare organization to become evidence-based practice (EBP) experts. Learn how EBP mastery promotes lifelong learning, empowers nurses to advance Nursing Science, and improves patient-centered outcomes.

Content Outline:
The purpose of this presentation is to describe innovative methods used by a Nurse Researcher to educate nurses from all sectors of a healthcare organization to become Evidence-based Practice (EBP) Experts. Learn how EBP mastery promotes lifelong learning, empowers nurses to advance Nursing Science and improves patient-centered outcomes.

Today's healthcare environment is extremely complex. To thrive, nurses must possess knowledge and skill from a myriad of fields, including Nursing Science. Therefore, every RN is responsible for keeping up-to-date and evidence-based in their area of specialization. Learning to become an expert in evidence-based practice (EBP) empowers nurses to become lifelong learners and effective problem-solvers who apply high quality scientific findings to practice situations.

In 2015, a newly appointed Nurse Researcher conducted an Evidence-based Practice learning needs assessment among the 650 RNs working at a community hospital. Findings indicated that less than 40% of nurse leaders and 60% of clinical nurses believed that they possessed the knowledge and skills need to design and conduct meaningful EBP Projects that led to improved patient outcomes. Patricia Benner's Model of Skills Acquisition In Nursing serves as the conceptual framework that guides this ongoing educational initiative. Working in collaboration with a Statistician and Librarian, the Nurse Researcher developed a series of EBP classes, workshops and activities that have succeed in transitioning nurses from novice to expert levels in Knowledge Translation.

Teaching nurses to become EBP experts empowers them to provide "up-to-date", high quality nursing care, which achieves excellent patient outcomes, advances Nursing Science and promotes the Nursing profession as leaders in the reformation of modern healthcare.

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Professional Experience: Possesses 46 years of professional Nursing experience in a wide range of clinical, teaching and leadership positions. Presented podium and poster presentation at numerous local, regional, national and international conference. Principal Investigator of 12 IRB-approved research studies and project leader of over 250 EBP projects.

Author Summary: Dr. Moran-Peters is a nationally respected expert in teaching Evidence-based Practice to nurses from all specialties and levels of healthcare organizations. She has presented her work, and won awards, at national and international conferences.