Outcomes of Evidence-Based Practice Education in Bedside Nurses: A Qualitative Study

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Recognizing Need for EBP Education

- Expectation to incorporate best evidence in nursing care
- Research has shown EBP results in improved patient outcomes
- Teaching EBP has become an imperative for healthcare organizations
- Integration into curriculum lags behind the need
EBP Scholars Program at SLCH

- Instituted in 2007
- Offered annually
- 34 scholars by January 2011
- Mentor to student ratio 1:2
Taking a Different View

- Outcomes of an EBP program often measured in projects completed.
- Primary goal was change in clinical decision-making at the bedside.
- Truly create a culture that sustains EBP.
**Study Purpose**

Describe the perspectives and factors related to the incorporation of EBP for clinical decision-making by staff nurses who have completed the Evidence-Based Practice Scholar’s program.
Describe the nurses’ experiences of using EBP for clinical decision-making after completion of the program.

What factors facilitate the use of EBP for clinical decision-making?

How are clinical situations approached when discrepancies in the clinical management of a patient between nurses and/or physicians are encountered?
Conceptual Framework

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

(Van Manen, 1990)

- Lived experience gives meaning to each person’s perception
- Especially useful when the topic of interest is not fully explored
- Selected as a means to gain deeper understanding of the everyday use of EBP
- Guides the level of meaning accessed during data collection and analysis
Study Design

- Interpretive phenomenological design
- Focus group methodology
  - More natural environment for the interview
  - Composition determined by program completion date
  - 4-5 participants per group
  - Led by a psychologist experienced in focus group methodology
Methods

- A semi-structured interview guide was developed through dialogue among researchers.
- Questions were sent to two highly experienced qualitative nurse researchers for feedback.
- Two of the investigators then participated in an intensive qualitative workshop.
- Questions were again revised and refined.
Data Analysis

- Audio tapes transcribed verbatim
- Semantic content analysis used to code data and identify themes
- Investigators conducted multiple working sessions to review coded data, refine themes, establish a common interpretation of the data, and determine frequency of each theme
Identified Themes

#1 Re-igniting a passion for nursing

- Desire to know they are providing best care
- “Passion” used in multiple responses
- Before EBP – nursing task oriented, after EBP nursing exciting/stimulating
- An expressed interest in research that wasn’t present before taking the EBP course
Exemplars

- EBP champions – passion as “contagious”
  Other nurses see the passion in the EBP scholars and get excited about practice changes

- Begin to question practices and seek answers

- Applying EBP in the practice setting
  - Pain medication post strabismus surgery
Re-igniting a passion for nursing

“It [EBP] just perked an entire, like, different side of nursing in me that I didn’t think I had before.”

“It’s just great to see the practice changes that we have made, and how somebody who feels so empowered to do that and I just have a passion and like I said five years ago, I would never have said I was here....I’ll come in and do my job and then I’ll be done and go home...so, I think EBP really made a difference”

“...you start questioning why you do certain things and this is a great way to answer those questions and feel good about it and know that we’re doing the best”
Identified Themes

#2 Strengthening relationships

- Being able to speak to physicians from a common perspective (decisions based on evidence)

- Improved relationships with parents knowing nursing care is based on evidence

- Strengthened relationships with peers as EBP mentors are able to help other nurses provide evidence-based care – seen as resources
Exemplar

- EBP mentor nurse a resource to other nurses – individually and as a team

- “I think people are more open because they know they have somebody that is evidence based trained and they come to me and they say, what about this?...I feel like I am a huge resource.”

- *EBP program gave this nurse the “tools” to question practices and find answers and to help others do so as well*
Strengthening relationships

“I think it’s changed most aspects of my care. I think it changed the way I interact with physicians and my co-workers, it certainly changes my care at the bedside; how I process things, how I critically think; we’re taught how to critically think but this is just a very different layer on top of that”

“..I also think that it helps physicians respect nurses more because they know they can look at them more as a colleague because they can talk about things [best evidence] like that...”

“It helps in forming a good relationship with parents for sure; so I think it helps a lot to kind of form trusting relationships with parents when the nurse can say to them, we do it this way because this is the best way to do it; not because this is the way we’ve always done it”
Identified Themes

#3  Autonomy through empowerment

- Increased confidence through knowledge
- Permission to question practices
- Feeling able to take on new challenges
- Giving nursing a “voice”
Exemplar

- EBP scholar nurse with knowledge of best practice for dialysis care assigned to another unit. The MD requested a different dialysis procedure. The nurse disputed the order with the physician by presenting the evidence – able to then perform the procedure using best technique
"And I think that makes the nurses feel important and they think that their voice matters. When you let them know that their voice matters nurses will start speaking up”

“It makes you feel like you actually have a voice and it’s okay to ask a question where for so long it wasn’t okay to ask a question; by being able to ask questions you feel like your opinion is valuable. That they take what you say seriously helps build confidence and then the next time you have a question it builds confidence again.”

“I think it’s empowered me and I’ve helped empower other nurses to make changes....its been a great professional career goal for me.”
## Identified Themes

### #4 Supporting the institution

- Best care provided to patients/families
- Aids in staff retention – nurse satisfaction
- Culture of teamwork among nursing units
- Supports professional growth/career advancement
- Provides a venue for a motivated person to share their ideas
Exemplars

- Emergency department practice changes that resulted in decreased family wait times and increased family satisfaction.

- Standardized central IV line dressing changes that reduced infection rates

- Neonatal intensive care unit staffing project that led to increased nurse satisfaction
Supporting the Institution

“...we have a couple EBP scholars and they want to make things so much better you know they want it to be the best. We want this hospital to be the best..”

“..now as a manager I am able to help my staff understand what evidence base is and what we truly, how we can make a difference for our patients.”

“ ..I hope its evident, that all practices become evidence based in that we are doing everything that’s for the babies, that’s for the children..so we know we are doing the best practice out there.”
## Frequency of Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-igniting a passion for nursing</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening relationships</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomy through empowerment</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting the institution</td>
<td>38</td>
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Identified Barriers

- Peer resistance
- Managerial misunderstanding
- “Bumps against the culture”
- Accessibility to resources
Implications

- Programs to teach bedside nurses how to incorporate EBP into care delivery not only result in better outcomes for patients but also greatly contribute to the sustained enculturation of EBP as a foundation for nursing practice.

- Programs need to include education for mid-level nursing management to support application of EBP at the bedside.