EVIDENCE-BASED NURSING
POSITION STATEMENT

Title of policy/position statement:
Evidence-Based Nursing

Issue being addressed:
Evidence-based nursing as the foundation for professional nursing practice.

Background of the issue:
Evidence-based practice has become a prominent issue in international health care. Rising health costs, the management principle of doing things right and the desire for quality improvement have created a climate for the evolution of evidence-based health care (Rycroft-Malone, Bucknall, Melnyk, 2004).

The movement was sparked by evidence-based medicine stimulated by the work of Cochrane (1976) and Sackett (1997). The end results are policy imperatives around clinical guideline development, research agendas focusing on intervention and problem based learning curricula (Kittson, 2004).

As nursing became involved in this movement, the quest to define best practices began, often resulting in complex challenges that have no easy solutions. What is clear is the responsibility of nurses to deliver care based on evidence, for nurses to be able to access, evaluate, integrate and use the best available evidence in order to improve practice and patient outcomes (Rycroft-Malone, Bucknall, Melnyk, 2004). The imperative is to reduce the gap between knowledge development and knowledge use to improve the health of people.

Policy or position developed, recommended, adopted:
As a leader in the development and dissemination of knowledge to improve nursing practice Sigma supports the development and implementation of evidence-based nursing (EBN). The society defines EBN as an integration of the best evidence available, nursing expertise, and the values and preferences of the individuals, families and communities who are served. This assumes that optimal nursing care is provided when nurses and health care decision-makers have access to a synthesis of the latest research, a consensus of expert opinion, and are thus able to exercise their judgment as they plan and provide care that takes into account cultural and personal values and preferences. This approach to nursing care bridges the gap between the best evidence available and the most appropriate nursing care of individuals, groups and populations with varied needs.
The society, working closely with key partners who provide information to support nursing research and EBN around the world, will be a leading source of information on EBN with an integrated cluster of resources, products and services that will foster optimal nursing care globally. The society, along with its strategic partners, will provide nurses with the most current and comprehensive resources to translate the best evidence into the best nursing research, education, administration, policy and practice.

Resources/references germane to issue and position:


Approval date and by whom statement:

Approved 12 December 2002, Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors.

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The Sigma provides leadership and scholarship in practice, education and research to enhance the health of all people. We support the learning and professional development of our members, who strive to improve nursing care worldwide.

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