Immersion Technique for Implementation of the ACEStar EBP Model
Jean Dowling Dols, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE
CHRISTUS Health

Problem: A healthcare system in the southern US did not have an EBP infrastructure. Evidence: Staff implemented research without a comprehensive review of the literature. No clinical teams focused on implementing EBP. The majority of nurses were unfamiliar with the concept of EBP.

Strategy: An immersion technique using the ACE-Star Model was selected. In July 2007, RNs representing each region of the healthcare system and specialties including rehabilitation, community, risk, and informatics met in San Antonio for a Health system EBP Seminar. The representatives worked as a team to build their knowledge base and support structure to initiate EBP. A timeline was set to develop 3 EBP guidelines. This newly formed EBP Advisory Team then attended the UTHSCSA EBP Summer Institute. The Team discussed EBP at meals, participated in presentations, met EBP experts, and networked with peers working to implement EBP. At the end of 3 days the team had selected 3 clinical problems to address. This initial immersion was followed by meetings every 2 weeks for 20 months building the EBP environment.

Practice Change: The healthcare system now uses an EBP model.

Evaluation: The immersion process resulted in an EBP Team that is confident in their skills. Each region now has an EBP Team led by one of the original EBP Advisory Team members.

Results: Four evidence-based protocols have been developed and effectively implemented – Falls Protocol, Color-Coded Alert Wristbands, Parenteral Promethazine, and Pressure Ulcer Prevention and Management in a healthcare system that did not have system-wide evidence based protocols prior to the 2007 immersion. Each has been accompanied by a full set of implementation tools including patient and staff education materials, computerized documentation, etc. Changes in the clinical outcomes demonstrate the impact of the new protocols.

Recommendations: Assure that members have time to devote to EBP when they return to practice.

Lessons Learned: Immersion is an effective technique for this population and process.

Bibliography