A Collaborative Approach to an Evidence-Based Fellowship
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Problem:
Staff nurses who have been in practice for several years lack the knowledge and skills to implement or sometimes to appreciate practice based on the latest evidence.

Evidence:
A recent initiative of Texas Christian University’s (TCU) Harris College of nursing and Health Sciences Center for Evidence-Based Practice and Research (CEBPR) has been a collaborative among North Texas universities and health care agencies. Collaborative members report that the majority of staff nurses are not familiar with evidence informing practice. This is evident when nurse researchers work with staff nurses to implement change based on recent evidence.

Strategy:
An Evidence-Based Practice Fellowship for direct care nurses has been implemented. Objectives include:
• Empowering fellows with EBP tools, skills and experiences.
• Preparing clinical nurses to serve as leaders in their institutions.
Thirty-four nurses have enrolled and expressed interest in EPB as a methodology to improve care delivery. The employing facility supports the Fellows by paying the Fellowship tuition, providing paid time off, and assigning mentors in the Fellows’ institution who provide support and encouragement.

Professional Practice Change:
Examples of these projects are post-op constipation/ileus in surgical spine patients, patient flow improvement through the emergency department, and deep vein thrombosis in children. The Fellows will present their EBP projects through oral and/or poster presentations at a regional EBP symposium in the fall of 2009.

Evaluation and Results:
The actual impact of this Fellowship cannot yet be measured, the hope is that in addition to infusing EBP into the practice setting, the gap between practice and academia will be lessened and direct care nurses will feel empowered to make a positive difference in their care environment.

Recommendations:
Recommendations include promoting the Clinical Nurse Leader role to the Fellows, recruiting nurses from other venues for health care such as clinics and community agencies, and involving graduates from this Fellowship experience in the next cohort to begin in the fall of 2009.
Bibliography


