The Introduction of Evidence Based Practice at Bay Pines VA Medical Center through Accelerated Learning
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Definition:

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a problem-solving approach that combines the best health care evidence from well-designed studies, along with a clinician's expertise and patients' preferences and/or values, leading to the best clinical decision making and outcomes for the patients and their families.

Strategy and Practice Change:

It currently takes an average of 17 years to translate research findings into clinical practice. In realizing this daunting task the VHA included EBP in their 2008-2012 Nursing Strategic Plan. The goal is to create an environment of inquiry in which all nurses apply the best available evidence to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes throughout the VA. At Bay Pines the Nursing EBP Committee chair and members completed their preparatory training at the University of Iowa and adopted their model as the framework for the EBP committee. Priorities of the Bay Pines Nursing EBP Committee were to educate the nursing staff on the value of EBP and support the training of nursing staff throughout the medical center. Specific goals during the implementation phase were to: educate nursing staff on the Iowa Model of Evidence Based Practice, to promote quality nursing care, support nursing research to achieve excellence in patient outcomes, and to develop a 5 year plan for fully implementing EBP with full administrative support. With this in mind the Nursing Evidence Based Practice Committee began its quest to educate the nursing staff here at Bay Pines on the significance of EBP throughout the nursing department. The committee developed an education program "on a roll" where the members brought the education to the staff on the units. We accomplished a 79% training compliance rate in 90 days during the months of January, February and March of 2009. The education reached 575 nursing staff and covered the following areas:

What is EBP?
"the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values"
"the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients"

Evidence Based Practice:
1. Ask the burning clinical question
2. Collect the most relevant and best evidence
3. Critically appraise the evidence
4. Integrate all evidence with one’s clinical expertise, patient preferences, and values in decision making
5. Evaluate the practice decision or change
Steps to Evidence-Based Nursing Practice:
1. Formulate the clinical question
2. Search your literature
3. Read and evaluate the literature
4. Make a decision based on the literature
5. Include findings in the new nursing protocols

Practice Change and Results:

Through the education "on a roll" method the staff were able to grasp the concept and incorporate the principles into nursing practice here at Bay Pines VA Medical Center. Bringing the education to the staff has been successful in the Mental Health Nursing increasing compliance by 89% attendance for trainings. Accelerated learning programs are geared toward teaching by involving the staff. Utilizing accelerated learning principles instead of the traditional power point lectures has increased attendance and the staff's involvement with the education process. They are multifaceted, encompassing a wide variety of creative methods and techniques based on current theories and research of how people learn best. Research shows that accelerated learning techniques can enhance retention and performance, and that students who use accelerated learning methods become more effective learners. New protocols have emerged through the use of EBP including: the discontinuation of the use of blood warmers, the development of the Suicide Risk Screening protocol, and elimination of the post residual amount for tube feedings. The standards of care committee now incorporates EBP articles when reviewing protocols and instituting new ones. The Nursing Practice Council reviews the EBP articles for grading and validation in the protocols presented from the Standards of Care Committee prior to the final roll out of the protocol. The installation of "ask it baskets" will be installed on the nursing units for staff to ask clinical questions and make recommendations for EBP projects here at Bay Pines VA Medical Center by July 2009 in order to further enrich the program and stimulate the staff’s comfort level with EBP.

Lessons Learned:

Through the use of Accelerated Learning and bringing the education to the point of care we were able to engage and train the staff. This has proven to be an effective method of educating our staff and has stimulated EBP projects for the future. Staff are now engaged with the EBP practice here on campus.

Recommendations:

Continue the use of Accelerated Learning as a teaching method for educating the nursing staff. Develop an EBP newsletter to reach all the staff and post projects so staff can be informed.
Bibliography


