Evidence based nursing practice is an approach to health care delivery whereby a clinical decision is based on combining the best available evidence with the values and wishes of the patient, to answer a clinical question. Once a problem is identified a clinical question is formulated. Evidence is collected by reviewing literature that addresses the question. This evidence is critically appraised for validity and then integrated into practice by combining patient values and clinical proficiency. The outcome is then evaluated. Simply put, it applies research to nursing practice.

Problem:
There are a number of barriers to implementing evidence based nursing. The new graduate nurse has learned the basis and reasoning for it but may be hesitant due to lack of experience and the desire to fit in with her new colleagues and organization. Tradition can be a barrier for the seasoned nurse who feels that “it has always been done that way”, and does not want to change methods unless they have personal knowledge that it doesn’t work. Time is another barrier to learning. The longer a nurse has been out of school, the harder change may come. Some nurses may not perceive that they have time to read research articles and are out of touch with current teaching methods. Curiosity about new methods may be curbed by other barriers such as tradition or organizational resistance to change. Health care organizations sometimes resist change because they have not researched the cost effectiveness of newer procedures in terms of repeat hospitalization and complications.

Evaluation/Results/Recommendations:
We need evidence based nursing to challenge today’s nurses to incorporate outstanding research evidence with the values of the patient to deliver the finest care possible. It benefits the nurse, the patient and the organization. Health care organizations can be assured they are utilizing their funds in an efficient manner. By implementing the most clinically proven techniques, the nurse promotes nurse autonomy and increases nurse satisfaction and confidence.