Bridging the Research-Practice Gap with a Virtual Journal Club
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**Problem:** Nurses at the bedside find it difficult to stay current with the literature. One method to improve access to evidence-based practice is through a journal club.

**Evidence:** Many studies have identified evidence based practice barriers at the bedside (Brown, et al. 2010). A key role of nursing leaders is to promote evidence based practice (Bradshaw, 2010). A journal club is a cost effective method to make evidence based practice more accessible (Honey & Baker, 2011). Use of information technology is essential to enable nurses’ easy access to evidence based practice articles and bridge the research-practice gap (Pochciol & Warren, 2009).

**Strategy:** The research council in three hospitals created a virtual journal club titled ‘Smarticles’. Three new evidence based articles were chosen each quarter. The general topics of the articles (practice, education and leadership) were based upon the hospital’s participatory nursing/governance structure. The articles and short quiz were posted on the internal web site. Participants received 0.5 continuing education credits. The journal club was linked to the electronic employee education record to provide tracking for each learning experience.

**Practice Change:** Nurses previously had to independently seek evidence based practice articles were provided an easy method to connect with the literature. Computer tracking and compliance provided easy access to reports for regulatory reports and accrediting bodies.

**Evaluation:** Setting up a virtual journal club requires dedicated start-up time and collaboration with information technology current work processes.

**Results:** Initially, the virtual journal club was launched without much success. After collaboration with education and communication departments, a marketing plan was developed and the journal club renamed “Smarticles”. A promotional campaign using Smarties candies resulted in increased use and positive feedback.

**Recommendations:** Implementation of a virtual journal club requires support from nursing leadership, education and information technology. A marketing strategy is essential to success.

**Lessons Learned:** Focusing evidence based articles on each of the nursing governance committees allowed accountability for content and updating the journal club.

**Bibliography**

