Teaching Evidence Based Practice: Development of an Evidence-Based Practice Fellowship Program for Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System
Denise Renfro, MS, BSN, ADN, RN
Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System
Gloria Martinez, Roberta Oka

**Problem:** An Evidence Based Practice (EBP) program was needed to drive nursing clinical practice changes grounded in the best scientific evidence, to promote and spread a culture and spirit of inquiry throughout nursing service.

**Evidence:** Promoting best practices grounded in the best scientific evidence results in: 1) highest level of quality care; 2) optimal outcomes for patients; 3) higher levels of staff satisfaction; 4) cost savings; 5) resource utilization and; 6) enhanced retention.

**Strategy:** Grant funding was obtained from the Betty Moore Foundation to develop our EBP program. The 12 month program consisted of nine, eight hour classes with four hours weekly devoted to project work. Participants completed an environmental assessment and evaluation of individual beliefs and knowledge prior to the program. Additionally, approximately 100 staff nurses not involved in the program was also assessed. Post assessments will be conducted at the completion of the program.

**Practice change** – Selection of the John Hopkins Nursing Evidence-Based practice model (JHNEBP). The program was based on JHNEBP’s process structure, process improvement, lean methodology, change and leadership theory, critical thinking and communication skills.

**Evaluation** - Program evaluation will consist of change in beliefs and practices related to EBP by leadership and RN staff. We will also assess the impact of the program based on the number of projects completed by the fellows, implementation and dissemination of each team’s project.

**Results** –Five projects are in various stages of implementation. Two Fellows have submitted abstracts. Anecdotal evidence from nursing service leadership describe significant professionalism of fellows, increased engagement in care and problem solving, engagement of interdisciplinary teams and support of innovations and interest in system-wide dissemination.

**Recommendations** –Implementation of facility based programs facilitate practice improvement and a culture of inquiry.

**Lessons learned** – Critical role of leadership, especially nurse managers, recognition of staff nurse achievements. Support for time to devote to projects and classes are imperative as is the focus on mentor development.
Bibliography:


