The EBP Academy: Creating Unit-Based Capacity for EBP
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Problem: Evidence-based practice is a critical process for improving the quality and outcomes of nursing care. However, most staff nurses have limited knowledge of and experience using EBP.

Evidence: Unit based EBP mentors serve as resources for staff nurses to aid in identification of clinical questions and implementation of evidence-based practice changes.

Strategy: The EBP Academy, an innovative 6 month mentorship program, was developed by the Department of Nursing Research at a children’s hospital in the southern United States. The program goal was to develop frontline unit-based EBP mentors.

Practice Change: Four sessions of the EBP Academy have been offered. Didactic content focuses on the EBP process, using EBP to improve nursing care quality, and mentorship. Participants are paired with mentors who provide guidance and support for the initiation of an EBP project.

Evaluation: Participants evaluate the program in terms of achieving objectives. Additionally, data are collected on project progress and outcomes, professional presentations, and leadership activities.

Results: Twenty-six nurses from 16 clinical areas have participated. Evaluation data demonstrate high satisfaction with learning outcomes and ability to apply the EBP process to clinical practice change. Professional development outcomes include development of a unit-based EBP committee, Nursing Grand Rounds presentations, and two poster presentations at national conferences. Participant projects have resulted in practice changes including a policy change permitting family cell phone use in intensive care units, implementation of a feeding protocol to improve consistency of feeding practice in infants transitioning from tube to oral feedings, and a chronic care team to improve consistency of care for long-term intensive care patients.

Recommendations: Additional follow-up is needed to facilitate formal evaluation of project and leadership outcomes, with ongoing support for project completion. Reuniting past participants in a project update/problem solving session would achieve both goals.

Lessons Learned: Developing unit based mentors through EBP Academy is a successful tool for reaching staff nurses, providing knowledge for using EBP in their own practice.

Bibliography: