

Keynote: Why is Evidence Based Practice Important to Nursing?

Students often wonder what is the importance of an Evidence Based Practice (EBP) course and why it is important to my role as a nurse practitioner? The American Nurses Association (ANA) originated the code of ethics in 1950 and has been revising these statements as our healthcare system dictates to help nurses understand their role and responsibility to their own practice, their patients and the community. For example, in review of Provision #5: “maintenance of competence and continuation of personal growth”, one may wonder how that applies to EBP. Competence is the ability to be successful at a particular task (Dictionary, n.d.). As trends in healthcare and new discoveries are unveiled in healthcare, the lifelong learning process is inevitable to sustainability and credibility in the profession. Additionally, in Provision #6: which outlines the continuation of personal growth (Lachman, O’Connor Swanson, & Winland-Brown, 2015), we see that nurses are strongly encouraged to maintain their professional responsibilities by engaging in lifelong learning activities.

The ANA more specifically defines how integral scholarly inquiry is in the profession through Provision 7 : “The nurse in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry...” Therefore, the role of the nurse is dependent on the ability for dissemination of research findings into clinical practice. These provisions articulate the standards by which nurses practice. Additionally, they are instrumental to personal growth and achievement.

In addition, there are specific guidelines set forth by credentialing agencies that provide you with certification standards as well as boards of nursing that dictate what you can and can NOT do based on your level of experience and licensure. In addition, the education system itself goes through scrutiny on performance documentation to outline how they are providing nurses

with the expertise and knowledge to assume these APN roles. As a result, the Essentials of Master's and Doctoral Education were formulated to help both the student and schools of nursing with assuring each class meets a certain level of rigor and student mastery to award a graduate degree from an accredited school (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2017).

The Master's Essentials demands expert application of the following areas: (a) EBP, (b) quality improvement methods, (c) outcomes measurement (d) systems knowledge and (e) leadership skills. Primary objectives for the Master's prepared nurse includes: (a) leading change to improve quality outcomes, (b) provide lifelong excellence, (c) collaborative change incorporating inter-professional development, (d) incorporation of care services across the system (e) employment of innovative nursing practices and (f) translation of evidence into practice. Essential IV: Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice focuses on the following objectives:

1. Integrate theory, evidence, clinical judgment, research, and inter-professional perspectives using translational processes to improve practice and associated health outcomes for patient aggregates.
 2. Advocate for the ethical conduct of research and translational scholarship (with particular attention to the protection of the patient as a research participant).
 3. Articulate to a variety of audiences the evidence base for practice decisions, including the credibility of sources of information and the relevance to the practice problem confronted.
 4. Participate, leading when appropriate, in collaborative teams to improve care outcomes and support policy changes through knowledge generation, knowledge dissemination, and planning and evaluating knowledge implementation.
 5. Apply practice guidelines to improve practice and the care environment.
 6. Perform rigorous critique of evidence derived from databases to generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice.
- (The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing, 2011).

While the Doctoral Essentials can fall into 2 subcategories, either research-focused or practiced-focused, both prepare nurses to tackle the APN role. The practice focused Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) is centered on innovation, evidence-based practices that reflect the

application of trustworthy research findings (Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006). More specifically when reviewing the essentials document, Essential III: Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for EBP really highlights the need for EBP in the development of an APN and DNP graduate. The translation of research into practice, dissemination and integration of new knowledge are fundamental priorities in this program as well as in the essential's documents. More specifically, the DNP program, as outlined in the essentials should:

Prepare the graduate to:

1. Use analytic methods to critically appraise existing literature and other evidence to determine and implement the best evidence for practice.
2. Design and implement processes to evaluate outcomes of practice, practice patterns, and systems of care within a practice setting, health care organization, or community against national benchmarks to determine variances in practice outcomes and population trends.
3. Design, direct, and evaluate quality improvement methodologies to promote safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable, and patient-centered care.
4. Apply relevant findings to develop practice guidelines and improve practice and the practice environment.
5. Use information technology and research methods appropriately to:
 - collect appropriate and accurate data to generate evidence for nursing practice
 - inform and guide the design of databases that generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice
 - analyze data from practice
 - design evidence-based interventions
 - predict and analyze outcomes
 - examine patterns of behavior and outcomes
 - identify gaps in evidence for practice
6. Function as a practice specialist/consultant in collaborative knowledge-generating research.
7. Disseminate findings from evidence-based practice and research to improve healthcare outcomes

(Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice, 2006).

References

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