

Section 4 Evidence Component

Applying Evidence: Making a Practice Recommendation

Overview

For this module, the issues related to making a practice recommendation are considered.

Objectives

- Identify the key factors to consider when making a practice recommendation.

Key Points

- Moving from the critical appraisal step into the next phase of applying the evidence starts with making a practice recommendation – or answering the question “should we adopt this practice”. A key consideration in answering this question is to realize that the decision to change practice is not determined by the evidence alone.
- There are three closely related questions to consider when making a practice recommendation are:
 - (1) Is the evidence strong enough to use the results? Factors to consider include quality, quantity, and the consistency of findings.
 - (2) Are the results applicable to my organizational setting? Factors to consider include relevance, feasibility, internal policies, impact on other disciplines, and the resources and associated cost (including staff burden) required to successfully implement the new practice.
 - (3) What do the results mean for my patients? Patient characteristics include preferences, goals and personal resources. In addition, it is vital to carefully evaluate the potential benefit of a practice change relative to possible harm to the patient. This is especially so when the evidence is weak, limited or inconclusive.
- Because most research examines “average effects” (i.e. the effect of a clinical practice for the average patient), it is important to consider that a clinical practice that is good on average may not result in the desired outcome for every patient. As such, you may need to tailor an evidence-based practice to an individual patient; this is where the expertise and judgment of the nurse are critically important.
- Most importantly, “patient preferences” is the trump card in all clinical decisions. Even when evidence shows that a particular intervention is best or warranted, a patient may decide to not agree to it.

Evidence-Based Practice



Suggested Activities

ONS EBP Video Exercise

After viewing the video, discuss the following questions:

1. Can I make a practice recommendation when the evidence is weak or non-existent?
2. What are the factors in my setting that impact practice recommendations?
3. What are some patient-centered considerations involved in making an evidence-based practice recommendation?

Practice Application Exercise

Ask the participants to share an experience with making a practice recommendation in their care setting.

1. Use the end of module questions to generate a discussion on issues related to making practice recommendations. Other questions may include:
 - a. What resources are needed to support a practice change? What are the costs of needed resources? How are resource needs prioritized? Who helps in securing necessary resources?
 - b. How are the associated staff burdens weighed and who decides what role they play in making practice recommendations?
 - c. How are the potential patient risks and/or benefits identified and considered? How are patients (or their families) involved in practice changes?
 - d. How are patient preferences incorporated in making practice recommendations?

Personal Commitment to EBP Exercise

1. Ask the participants to share some of the important take-home points that they have learned in this lesson.
2. How will you use what you learned today in your practice?

Materials are available through the provided hyperlink:

ONS EBP Video 8 [Committing to Our EBP Vision through Making a Practice Recommendation](#)

Other Resources Computer with ability to show video – requires access to ONS intranet website.

Suggested Time 60 minutes