
Section 4 Evidence Component

Asking a Practice Question

Overview

The first step in the EBP process is explored in this module. This section assists the learner in developing a relevant, answerable practice question.

Objectives

- Discuss the first step in the EBP process: asking a practice question.
- Discuss the importance of developing relevant and answerable practice questions.
- Formulate a focused, searchable, answerable practice question.

Key Points

- The willingness to question and reflect on current practice is fundamental to improving our practice – no matter what setting or area of nursing practice you are in. Practice questions can address clinical, administrative or educational issues in nursing.
- The first step in the EBP process is to develop relevant and answerable practice questions – this takes time and careful consideration of the influential contextual factors.
- Developing a relevant practice question is not about the format of the question per se; rather it is about what prompts a nurse to question current practice. Relevant questions address gaps in our practice. Knowing the context of the organization is core to developing relevant practice questions. Incorporate internal data (e.g. QI or NQSI data) to establish scope and problem significance. Link the question to organizational priorities and/or the strategic plan to support relevancy
- Formulating an answerable practice question requires writing a focused and searchable question. It is helpful to use a standard format to complete this step. The ONS EBP Workgroup suggests the following question stems: “Is there evidence to suggest _____?” or “What does the evidence tell us that we should do to prevent _____?”
- The practice question reflects your overall goal; therefore it is essential that the question accurately depicts the problem or issue. The PICO (or PICO-T) format pinpoints key components in the practice question – these components are used to identify pertinent terms and/or phrases for the evidence search.
- This module links to ONS EBP Roadmap 1 questions 2 – 6.

Evidence-Based Practice



Suggested Activities

ONS EBP Video Exercise

After viewing the video, discuss the following questions:

1. What are the practice issues in your care area?
2. How do you determine if practice issues are relevant?
3. How might stakeholders impact practice questions?
4. How do you translate practice issues into answerable practice questions?

Practice Application Exercise

Present a clinical scenario or have the participants use their own practice scenario.

1. Using the ONS suggested question stem, ask the participants to develop a practice question based on the scenario and write it on a white board or flip-chart paper (this may be done in dyads, groups, or alone).
2. Have participants underline key components in the practice question (use the PICO-T).
3. Have participants present their question to the group.
4. Facilitate group discussion for each question – feedback may include: (1) Suggestions on how to refine or focus the question; (2) Factors to consider that might be missing; (3) Feasibility of collecting data to inform the outcome.
5. Revise questions based on the feedback.

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 4 [Committing to Our Evidence Based Practice Vision through Asking the EBP Question](#)

Handouts

1. [ONS EBP Roadmap Worksheet 1 questions 2-6](#)
2. [Asking the Practice Question Worksheet](#)

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

Suggested Time 90 minutes