

Evidence-based nursing practice: needs, tools solutions

MLA Annual Meeting Symposium, May 3 2003 San Diego

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This one day symposium in San Diego formed part of the Medical Library Association's Annual meeting, although it took place on the day before the official start of proceedings. It was a joint venture between the Nursing and Allied Health Resources Section of the MLA (NAHRS) and the Interagency Council on Information Resources for Nursing (ICIRN). One innovation for the day was to bring together nurses educators and information professionals working in the area to highlight common issues and work together to discuss solutions and share best practice. The objectives of the day were to define gaps and barriers for evidence-based nursing practice, compare nurses' information seeking behaviour in various settings, and examine evidence-based electronic nursing resources and to identify strategies to improve knowledge-based information services for nurses and students. The majority of the participants were from North America.

The first part of the day concentrated on information literacy as a vital competency for nurses to implement evidence-based nursing practice. The ICIRN presented the results of three parallel, collaborative studies of the information literacy needs of nursing faculty and students, clinicians and administrators. The studies found that "traditional" forms of information resources such as textbooks and asking colleagues were still heavily used by faculty and

students. Incredibly, one study found that nearly 70% of Registered Nurses were "not at all" familiar with evidence-based practice and 53% seldom or never read research articles. Peg Allen presented the summary report of the NAHRS Mapping the Literature of Nursing which sought to identify core journals cited in the nursing literature and determine bibliographic coverage to influence database providers to improve access. The American Journal of Nursing was the most cited journal title, but the "Big Five" medical journals (Annals of Internal Medicine, JAMA, NEJM, BMJ and Lancet) also featured strongly.

During a break from the results of research, attendees had the opportunity to attend workshops on tools for evidence-based nursing practice. Sessions on searching Medline and Cinahl for nursing topics, accessing full text electronic journals, systematic reviews, nursing resources on the web, evidence based nursing resources and PDAs were offered.

The afternoon sessions explored "what works" in facilitating evidence-based practice. Speakers here presented examples of best practice and projects. Curriculum integrated information literacy was a theme and innovative examples were provided from the UK, New York and Seattle. Elizabeth H. Wood described a unique situation within a nursing research department at a Comprehensive Cancer Centre where librarians assist staff in translating research into practice by researching problems to present to bedside nurses. Ingrid Hendrix, Nursing Librarian at the University of New Mexico described a project to encourage nurses to undertake research by collaborating with a clinical nurse researcher and a librarian to refine the problem and perform a literature search. The problem of nursing research becoming stalled due to nursing shortages and a greater emphasis on patient care was highlighted. She proposed that nurses' involvement in evidence-based nursing would improve their job satisfaction, the quality of patient care and minimise burnout – all issues relating to the nursing shortage in North America.

For me, the symposium provided a fascinating glimpse into how the issues around supporting evidence based practice resonate across the Atlantic.

Optimistic examples of how the information professional can help promote and facilitate the ideals behind evidence-based nursing practice were well received in an atmosphere of collaboration and positive discussion. An overview of the symposium and electronic presentations are available from

<http://nahrs.library.kent.edu/resource/symposium/>

Evidence-Based Librarianship Folio Course: an evaluation

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Back in May, myself and colleagues signed up for the Evidence Based Librarianship course, delivered via Andrew Booth at SchARR. This course is designed to provide flexible learning so rather than having to take a day out to attend a full-day course, the content is delivered via email over a series of weeks.

After signing up, we were all assigned to a buddy group. Over 630 people had signed up to undertake the course so a number of buddy groups were set up containing about 6-8 people from all over the World. The idea of the buddy group was to allow us to discuss the set tasks with fellow Librarians. We also saved all the emails that we sent in a Word document which we submitted as a portfolio at the end of the course.

The first task was an icebreaker designed for us to get to know our buddies. This was a general introduction to ourselves and then a task asking us to pick a character from film, book, TV etc. that epitomised our character. This was