

Engaging Advanced Practice Nurses in Evidence-Based Practice: An E-Mentoring Pilot Program

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Abstract

Background and Purpose: Quality healthcare is based on evidence, yet most clinicians do not consistently engage in evidence-based practice or participate in knowledge translation due to organizational barriers and competing priorities. Mentoring is highly valued in the nursing profession, with over half of nurses indicating that they need access to a mentor with Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) expertise to elevate it as a priority in care and feel comfortable voicing intentions and rationales to change practice. The purpose of this project was to leverage the small number of EBP mentors within the organization to deliver knowledge and support in order to improve organizational readiness for EBP implementation, enhance individual beliefs regarding the value of EBP and the capability to implement EBP into clinical practice, and increase the extent to which healthcare workers integrate scientific evidence into their clinical practice.

Methods: A quality improvement project utilizing a one-group pretest-posttest survey design was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an evidence-based, 12-week nurse inquiry e-mentoring program for Advanced Practice Nurses. Organizational readiness for EBP implementation was measured using the Organizational Culture and Readiness for System-Wide Implementation of EBP (OCRSIEP) scale, individual beliefs regarding the value of EBP and the capability to implement EBP into clinical practice was measured using the EBP beliefs (EBPB) scale, and the extent to which healthcare workers integrate scientific evidence into their clinical practice was measured using the EBP Implementation (EBPI) scale.

Results: A total of 11 Advanced Practice Registered Nurses completed both the pretest and posttest surveys. When comparing the pre-intervention and post-intervention scores, the median OCRSIEP score increased from 88 (IQR: 73-97) to 99 (IQR: 90-113), median EBPB scores increased from 61 (IQR: 56-69) to 70 (IQR: 64-73), and median EBPI scores increased from 13 (IQR: 7-33) to 20 (IQR: 13-31). The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the e-mentoring program. A statistically significant improvement in EBPB scores was identified when comparing the pretest and posttest scores ($p = 0.005$).

Conclusion: A 12-week Nurse Inquiry E-mentoring Program can leverage the small number of EBP mentors in an organization to improve Advanced Practice Registered Nurses' beliefs about the value of evidence-based practice. A program lasting longer in duration may also significantly improve Organizational Culture & Readiness for System-Wide Implementation of EBP and EBP implementation.

Implications: By utilizing technology and leveraging economies of scale, many more nurses can be mentored to improve engagement in evidence-based practice.

Keywords: Evidence-Based Practice, Advanced Practice Nursing, E-mentoring, Mentor, Clinical Inquiry, Knowledge Translation