

IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE COMMITTEE IN THE PERI-ANESTHESIA CARE UNIT

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Background: Evidence based practice is no longer recognized as an “above the standard” performance of a nurse, but instead a baseline competence. However, a lack of skills in evaluating research findings is one of the barriers to nurses utilizing this information in the clinical area and their participation in research studies (Polit & Beck, 2010, p.39).

Identification of the Problem: Nurses in a peri-anesthesia unit were asking for evidence based answers to clinical problems. However, most felt uncomfortable formulating a literature search or critiquing an article.

Process of Implementation: The hospital’s research committee helped the Evidence Based Practice Committee (EBPC) to develop guidelines for developing a journal club to educate staff about evidence based practice. At the first three meetings, a member of the research committee educated staff on how to critique articles. Next, research topics were identified by the staff and researched by the EBPC. Articles were distributed by email along with post-tests and evaluations, which allowed them to obtain contact hours. A follow-up review of the articles was presented by selected staff during a regularly scheduled unit meeting.

Results: The staff has an increased understanding of the research process and the research critique. Participation in the EBPC and research studies has continued to gain momentum and the use of the research process continues to spread. Other units have used these guidelines to develop their own EBPC, throughout the medical center.

Implications: Identifying gaps in knowledge about the research process can aid leadership in decreasing barriers to evidence based practice.