30th World Congress on

ADVANCED NURSING PRACTICE

September 04-06, 2017 | Edinburgh, Scotland

PICO: An Alternative to Tradition

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Today, advanced practice nurses must continually ask themselves: "To what extent is the care and health education that I provide evidence-based?" Advanced practice nurses are eager to identify researchable questions within their clinical settings. An underlying challenge for the advanced practice nurse is distinguishing between research utilization and evidence-based practice for providing the best clinical care. To meet this challenge, analytical skills used in the critical evaluation of research are needed. Graduate research courses traditionally begin with quantitative and qualitative research methods and end with a critical analysis of research evidence for nursing practice. An alternative aproach is to use a PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) model in research course design. This approach immediatley engages the clinician in the identification of researchable questions while developing a critical appraisal skill set for evidence-based practice. The PICO model offers an applied context for synthesizing advanced nursing knowledge with the best available evidence to make decisions for practice.

Biography

Janet H. Davis holds the BSN from Georgetown University, the MSN in Maternal Child Nursing from Boston University, an MBA from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the PhD in Education from Loyola University Chicago. She has accumulated numerous accomplishments during her distinguished career in higher education. She has held the roles of faculty and dean. Her funded research includes approximately $200,000 in federal training grants and studies on best practices in education. She is the author and co-author of published research abstracts, 30 articles, a book, and chapters in two additional books.

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Notes:

Adv Practice Nurs, an open access journal
ISSN: 2573-0347

Nursing Practice 2017
September 04-06, 2017

Volume 2, Issue 3 (Suppl)

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