

EBP: Barriers, Facilitators, and Core Competencies

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Introduction

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is a cornerstone of modern healthcare, yet its successful integration faces various challenges and requires specific competencies across different settings. A systematic review identifies common facilitators such as strong leadership support and robust educational programs, alongside persistent barriers including lack of time, insufficient resources, and knowledge gaps, all of which hinder EBP adoption in nursing environments. Understanding these complex factors is crucial for crafting effective strategies to promote EBP implementation [1].

Beyond identifying barriers and facilitators, defining the essential skills for EBP is paramount. Core competencies crucial for EBP across diverse healthcare professions have been outlined, emphasizing common themes in the skills needed to formulate clinical questions, efficiently acquire relevant evidence, critically appraise its validity, apply findings judiciously, and rigorously evaluate outcomes. This framework serves as a guide for developing targeted educational interventions aimed at improving EBP proficiency among practitioners [2].

Specifically within nursing, perceptions of EBP are largely positive, but significant hurdles remain in translating evidence into daily practice. A qualitative review highlights that organizational factors and individual knowledge deficits often impede this translation. This underscores the necessity for tailored implementation strategies that address both personal and systemic barriers to EBP engagement within the nursing profession [3].

The application of EBP is further refined by the concept of shared decision-making. This approach is an integral component, stressing the vital need to integrate patient values and preferences with clinical expertise and the best available evidence. True EBP, in this context, demands a collaborative effort to optimize patient outcomes and satisfaction, moving beyond purely clinical considerations to embrace the patient's unique perspective [4].

Examining other healthcare sectors, a cross-sectional study among general practitioners in northern Greece reveals varying levels of EBP engagement and highlights familiar barriers like time constraints and resource scarcity. This indicates a clear need for targeted interventions and specialized training to enhance EBP integration effectively within primary care settings, ensuring its relevance across the healthcare spectrum [5].

The foundation of EBP lies in education, and its current status in nursing and midwifery curricula warrants attention. A study assessing EBP education integration in Iranian schools uncovered discrepancies in teaching methods and content delivery. This calls for standardized educational frameworks to better equip future healthcare professionals with the necessary EBP competencies from the outset of

their training [6].

Organizational dynamics significantly influence EBP implementation. Strong leadership support and an organizational culture that fosters inquiry are critical determinants for successful EBP adoption among staff nurses. Fostering a supportive environment and providing essential resources are shown to substantially influence nurses' engagement with EBP initiatives, making organizational commitment a key success factor [7].

On a broader scale, integrating evidence into health policy and practice presents systemic challenges alongside emerging opportunities. The complex interplay between research generation, policy-making, and practical implementation necessitates stronger infrastructure and collaborative efforts. This is essential to bridge the persistent gap between the creation of evidence and its meaningful application in real-world health scenarios [8].

To enhance future practitioners' capabilities, pedagogical interventions are vital. A systematic review focusing on baccalaureate nursing students examines interventions designed to cultivate critical thinking skills, thereby improving their engagement with EBP. It identifies effective strategies for integrating critical appraisal and clinical reasoning into nursing education, which are fundamental to strengthening EBP competencies [9].

Finally, EBP implementation strategies must be adapted for diverse global contexts. A scoping review explores various approaches within global health, specifically identifying methods tailored for resource-limited settings and distinct cultural environments. It stresses the importance of context-specific adaptations and robust local partnerships to effectively translate global evidence into tangible local health improvements, ensuring EBP is both relevant and effective worldwide [10].

Description

The landscape of Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is multifaceted, characterized by a complex interplay of individual competencies, organizational support, educational foundations, and contextual adaptations. Multiple studies highlight that successful EBP implementation hinges on addressing both systemic barriers and fostering individual capabilities. For instance, a systematic review points to critical facilitators like leadership support and educational programs, while identifying barriers such as lack of time, resources, and knowledge in nursing settings. Understanding these factors is paramount for developing effective strategies to promote EBP adoption. Simultaneously, nurses' own perceptions of EBP, though generally positive, reveal significant challenges in translating evidence into practice due to organizational issues and knowledge gaps, emphasizing the need for tailored

strategies [1, 3].

Developing core competencies is fundamental for practitioners across various healthcare professions. A systematic review identifies essential skills for EBP, including the ability to ask clear clinical questions, acquire relevant evidence, critically appraise its validity, effectively apply findings, and evaluate outcomes. This framework is vital for creating targeted educational interventions to improve EBP proficiency. Correspondingly, specific pedagogical interventions are explored to foster critical thinking skills in baccalaureate nursing students, aiming to enhance their engagement with EBP by integrating critical appraisal and clinical reasoning into their education [2, 9].

The integration of EBP principles extends beyond individual skills to encompass broader organizational and policy considerations. Shared decision-making emerges as a key element of EBP, underscoring the necessity of integrating patient values and preferences alongside clinical expertise and the best available evidence. This collaborative approach is crucial for optimizing patient outcomes and satisfaction. Furthermore, strong leadership support and an organizational culture that values inquiry are identified as critical determinants for successful EBP implementation among staff nurses, with a supportive environment and resources significantly influencing engagement. These elements are essential for fostering an environment where EBP can truly flourish [4, 7].

Challenges in EBP integration are not confined to specific professions but span various healthcare contexts, from primary care to global health. A cross-sectional study among general practitioners in northern Greece reveals varying levels of EBP adoption and persistent barriers like time and resource scarcity, advocating for targeted interventions. Similarly, a scoping review on EBP in global health contexts highlights the need for implementation strategies tailored to resource-limited settings and diverse cultural environments, stressing context-specific adaptations and strong local partnerships. These insights demonstrate that EBP must be adaptable and supported by local infrastructure to be effective worldwide [5, 10].

Finally, the educational foundation of EBP plays a pivotal role in shaping future healthcare professionals. Assessing the integration of EBP education within nursing and midwifery curricula reveals discrepancies in teaching methods and content delivery, suggesting a clear need for standardized educational frameworks. This ensures that future practitioners are adequately equipped with EBP competencies. Moreover, at a systemic level, integrating evidence into health policy and practice presents its own set of challenges and opportunities. Bridging the gap between research, policy-making, and implementation requires stronger infrastructure and collaborative efforts, emphasizing that EBP is a complex ecosystem requiring continuous development and support from education to policy [6, 8].

Conclusion

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is a cornerstone of effective healthcare, yet its widespread implementation is influenced by a diverse set of facilitators, barriers, and essential competencies. Studies consistently highlight that leadership support and targeted educational programs significantly promote EBP adoption, particularly in nursing. However, pervasive challenges like insufficient time, limited resources, and knowledge gaps frequently impede its successful integration across various healthcare settings [1, 7]. Nurses, while generally holding positive views, struggle with translating evidence into practice due to these organizational and individual knowledge deficits [3].

Developing core competencies is crucial, encompassing the ability to formulate clinical questions, acquire and appraise evidence, apply findings, and evaluate outcomes. These skills are fundamental across all healthcare professions and necessitate standardized educational frameworks within nursing and midwifery cur-

ricula to adequately prepare future practitioners [2, 6]. Enhancing critical thinking through specific pedagogical interventions is also vital for nursing students to improve their engagement with EBP [9].

Beyond individual skills, EBP demands a collaborative environment. Shared decision-making, which integrates patient values and preferences with clinical expertise, is an essential component for optimizing patient outcomes [4]. Organizational culture also plays a significant role; a supportive environment that values inquiry and provides necessary resources is critical for staff nurses to engage with EBP initiatives [7]. Furthermore, general practitioners exhibit varying levels of EBP adoption, facing similar barriers like time and resources, underscoring the need for tailored interventions in primary care [5]. Addressing systemic challenges in health policy and practice integration, especially in global health contexts, requires robust infrastructure, context-specific strategies, and strong local partnerships to bridge the gap between evidence generation and practical application worldwide [8, 10].

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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