What is Evidence Based Nursing?

Historically, nursing practice has been based on tradition or the way it has always been done. Today, the nursing profession is utilizing research findings to develop, implement and evaluate changes in nursing practice. As a result, an evidence-based foundation for nursing practice is being established.

Evidence based nursing (EBN) is the process by which nurses make clinical decisions using the best available research evidence, their clinical expertise and patient preferences. Three areas of research competence are: interpreting and using research, evaluating practice, and conducting research. These three competencies are important to EBN.

To carry out EBN, the following factors must be considered:

1. sufficient research must have been published on the specific topic,
2. the nurse must have skill in accessing and critically analyzing research,
3. the nurse’s practice must allow him/her to implement changes based on EBN.

The goal of EBN is to improve the quality of care and provide patients with a positive clinical outcome.

(Submitted by John P. Harper, MSN, RN,BC)


For more information on Evidence-based Practice: Contact the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) at http://www.ahrq.gov.