

Roles for librarians in evidence-based nursing - comparing nurses' information retrieval skills and application in two hospitals in the United Kingdom and Finland

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Abstract

Objectives

According to many studies, although many nurses are aware of the latest research findings available to optimise their nursing care, the majority instead, rely on research findings, intuition, tradition, and the authority of policies and procedures for direction in particular situations(1).

Therefore, it is critical that nurses understand the process of moving toward an evidence base for their practice. In an international collaboration, we wanted to find out if present-day nurses practice evidence-based nursing, to what extent, and to determine the educational needs, the knowledge about, and the attitudes towards evidence-based nursing and information retrieval of the nursing staff. We were also interested in any differences in our findings across the nurses surveyed in Finland and the United Kingdom (UK).

Methods

In order to gather information in our hospitals, we conducted surveys in the form of web-based questionnaires, asking about nurses' understanding of the concept of and training in evidence-based nursing, as well as training in information retrieval. The surveys were almost identical, and were amended to reflect the differences in information resources available in the two countries involved.

Results

In Glenfield Hospital the survey was conducted during late September and early October 2008, and there were 137 respondents. In Kuopio University Hospital the survey was carried out in May 2007 and there were 162 respondents. The key findings showed that nurses based in both Finland and the UK had a very good awareness of evidence-based nursing, contrary to previous research.

Conclusions

Training on information retrieval was highlighted as useful, but many nurses from both countries stated they were unaware that such training existed. Both hospitals are putting actions in place to improve marketing and access to training in this area.

Implications for research: The impact of the actions generated from the results of both surveys should be evaluated by re-surveying nurses in approximately 12 months time. This will help determine the effects of actions put into place.

References

1. Brady N, Lewin L. Evidence-based practice in nursing: Bridging the gap between research and practice. *J Pediatr Health Care*. 2007;21(1):53-6.