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# Evidence-Based Practice Curriculum

## VHA Office of Nursing Service

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### Introduction

The Office of Nursing Services' vision is that "VA Nursing is a dynamic, diverse group of honored, respected, and compassionate professionals. VA is the leader in the creation of an organizational culture where excellence in nursing is valued as essential for quality healthcare to those who served America."

The mission of the Office of Nursing Services Evidence Based Practice Work Group is to facilitate infrastructure development to advance evidence based practice. To fulfill our mission we are engaged in several activities to meet these objectives. One such activity is the development of this curriculum introducing key concepts in the evidence-based practice paradigm.

### Overview

This curriculum is intended to:

- Serve as a resource for those who are teaching evidence-based practice in the clinical setting.
- Serve as a resource for those who are responsible for developing and leading evidence-based practice programs, including facility-wide EBP programs, the RN Transition-to-Practice program, and other relevant programs.

The content is organized into five main sections – each section containing individual modules that the instructor can tailor to best fit the needs of the learner. The first section focuses on the definition and overview of evidence-based practice; and sets the stage for the Office of Nursing Service's vision of EBP for VA nurses. The second and third sections focus on the knowledge and skills fundamental to integrating patient preferences and clinical expertise within the EBP paradigm. The fourth section concentrates on the knowledge and skills fundamental to the process steps that support the best available evidence component: Asking the practice question, Acquiring the best available evidence, Appraising the evidence, Applying the evidence, and Assessing (evaluating) a practice change. The final section is a list of textbooks and supporting references.

Where applicable, modules are linked to the ONS EBP video series which present a brief introduction and overview of core evidence-based practice concepts.

### Tips on How to Use This Curriculum

This curriculum is based on an extensive reading and consideration of the EBP literature, as well as considerable dialogue among members of the ONS EBP Work Group and our colleagues. The modules are organized around



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### Curriculum Sections

#### Section 1: EBP Overview

- Defining EBP for Nursing
- EBP as a Foundation of Nursing Practice

#### Section 2: Patient Preferences Component

- Defining Patient Preferences

#### Section 3: Clinical Expertise Component

- Defining Clinical Expertise: [module forthcoming](#)
- Integration: [module forthcoming](#)

#### Section 4: Evidence Component

- The EBP Process
- Asking a Practice Question
- Stakeholder Engagement
- EBP Process, Quality Improvement, System Redesign and Research
- Acquiring Evidence Part 1 Types of Evidence
- Acquiring Evidence Part 2 Internet Resources for Evidence
- Acquiring Evidence Part 3 Searching for Evidence
- Appraising Evidence Part 1 Introduction to Validity, Reliability and Bias
- Appraising Evidence Part 2 Appraising Individual Pieces of Evidence
- Appraising Evidence Part 3 Appraising a Body of Evidence
- Applying Evidence Part 1 Making a Practice Recommendation
- Applying Evidence Part 2 Changing Behavior: [module forthcoming](#)
- Applying Evidence Part 3 Developing an Implementation Plan: [module forthcoming](#)
- Assessing Evidence: [module](#)

themes current to evidence-based practice. We chose to chunk the material by content that was conducive for short, focused teaching/learning sessions. However, we encourage those using this curriculum to combine modules as appropriate for the particular audience and time allotted. Likewise, we have ordered the modules in a sequence logical for an ongoing class on EBP. Again, this is a suggested sequence which may be modified as needed.

Additional modules are being created and will be added to the curriculum upon completion. As our knowledge of EBP expands, current modules will be updated to reflect new information. Please continue to [check for new modules and updates](#).

Each module is organized and presented in the following segments:

- **Overview:** The overview provides a brief description of the content.
- **Objectives:** The learning objectives are written at a level consistent with a basic EBP curriculum; however, the objectives can be adapted to meet the needs of the learner. For example, the objective “Describe how evidence-based practice serves as a foundation for nursing practice” is written at a *knowledge* or *comprehensive* level objective. This level is easily modified to meet the needs of the more advanced learner by using action verbs such ‘demonstrate’ (*application* level) or ‘illustrate’ (*analysis* level).
- **Key Points:** The key points cover the important information and tenets fundamental to the module subject. Each key point is viewed as essential for a full and meaningful appreciation of EBP. For more information, see the supporting references. The key points may be used as lecture points, PPT slides, or to generate discussion questions.
- **Suggested Activities:** The suggested activities are based on teaching strategies found in the literature and on the many years of experience of ONS EBP Work Group members and our colleagues in teaching EBP. The suggested activities have been successful with a wide variety of audiences and are meant to provide a creative, practical application of the module content. Instructors are encouraged to adapt activities or supplement their own or other activities shown to be successful.
- **Materials:** Links to the handouts, PPT slides and other materials meant to supplement the modules are provided. These materials may be used as is or adapted to meet the needs of the learners.
- **Other Resources:** This section is included in select modules where particular resources are required to complete the suggested activity. For example, a computer with access to the VA intranet is required to show an ONS EBP video.
- **Suggested Time:** The allocated time is based on experience with teaching the content; however times allotted can be adjusted based on the target audience and organizational resources.

[forthcoming](#)

- Dissemination: [module forthcoming](#)

Section 5: Supporting References