New evidence about evidence-based practice (EBP) in nursing:
National survey indicates low levels of readiness for EBP among nurses at Finnish university hospitals

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Disclosure

• **Authors of research study presented:**
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• **Learner objectives:** The learner will be able to:
  1) List 2 factors affecting nurses’ readiness for EBP at a non-English-speaking country (Finland)
  2) Describe Finnish RNs’ confidence in employing EBP
  3) Compare Finnish RNs’ perceived and actual EBP knowledge

• **Employer** (presenter):
  Xamk University of Applied Sciences, Mikkeli, Finland

• **Conflict of interest statement:**
  The presenter has no conflicts of interest. No sponsorship or commercial support was given to the presenter.
Greetings from Finland: 5.5 million people, 5 university hospitals, 108,000 nurses (14.1 per 1000 residents)

1. Helsinki University Hospital (HUH)
2. Turku University Central Hospital (TUCH)
3. Kuopio University Hospital (KUH)
4. Oulu University Hospital (OUH)
5. Tampere University Hospital (TUH)
Presentation Overview

• Readiness for evidence-based practice (EBP) in nursing

• National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals: Results
  • RNs’ *perceived* EBP knowledge
  • RNs’ confidence in employing EBP in daily practice
  • RNs’ *actual* EBP knowledge

• Discussion

• Conclusions

• Next Steps

• Questions & Comments
There is a difference between evidence-based practice and research utilization

- Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a life-long problem-solving approach to the delivery of healthcare integrating:
  - Best evidence from well-designed studies (i.e., external evidence) with
  - Patient’s preferences and values
  - Clinician’s expertise, which includes internal evidence gathered from patient data (Melnyk & Fineout-Overholt 2011)

- EBP is NOT the same thing as research utilization, by which is meant retrieval, critique, and use of research results in practice from a single primary study (Melnyk et al. 2011)
What is readiness for EBP in nursing?

- In this study, nurses’ readiness for EBP was defined as their EBP competencies, i.e., their:
  - EBP knowledge: both nurses’ self-assessed, i.e., perceived EBP knowledge, and actual EBP knowledge based on their performance
  - EBP skills
  - EBP attitudes
  - EBP beliefs
  - Self-efficacy, i.e., confidence in their own ability to implement EBP

- National survey of Registered Nurses working at every university hospital (n=943) in Finland consisted of 2 parts:
  - RNs’ self-assessment of their EBP knowledge and self-efficacy (i.e., confidence) on their ability to implement EBP
  - EBP knowledge test measuring their actual EBP knowledge level
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943)


- Survey response rate: 50%
- RN respondents from every university hospital
- Only completely completed surveys were utilized (n=943)
- Finnish translation of the Evidence-Based Practice Inventory (ERI) (Stevens 2009)
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Results

- Finnish RNs’ *perceived* EBP knowledge and previous EBP experience:
  - 95% of Finnish RNs at university hospitals were familiar with the constructs of EBP and EBN
  - 62% of Finnish RNs assessed themselves to be at the Beginner-level in terms of their EBP knowledge, 14% rated themselves at the Intermediate-level, and only 3% perceived to be at the Advanced level
  - 21% of Finnish RNs indicated having no EBP knowledge, and 47% had no EBP experience
  - There were significant differences in RNs’ perceived EBP knowledge levels between those RNs who indicated having no EBP knowledge and RNs at other EBP knowledge levels
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Results

- Finnish RNs’ self-efficacy, i.e., confidence in their own ability to implement EBP:
  - Overall mean self-efficacy (confidence) score: 74.4 out of a range of 20-120, or 62%
  - Corresponds to 3.7 on a 6-point Likert-scale (1-6)
  - Finnish RNs’ confidence in their own ability to employ EBP in their practice was at a low to moderate level
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Results

- Finnish RNs’ actual EBP knowledge level, measured by an EBP knowledge test:
  - Overall mean actual EBP knowledge score: 7.5 out of a range of 0-15, or 50%
  - Percentages of correct answers to single EBP knowledge test questions varied from 89% to 9%
  - There was a direct, weak, but statistically significant correlation between RNs’ overall mean self-efficacy score and the number of their correct responses on the EBP knowledge test ($r = 0.221$)
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Discussion

- Are the low to moderate self-efficacy, i.e., confidence scores at too low a level for Finnish RNs to be able to implement EBP in their daily practice at university hospitals?

- If the EBP knowledge test results (50%) had been school test scores, most RNs at university hospitals in Finland would have clearly failed the test = very low level of actual EBP knowledge

- The direct correlation between RNs’ overall mean self-efficacy score and the number of their correct responses on the EBP knowledge test ($r = 0.221$) indicated that
  - The stronger the RNs’ actual EBP knowledge level, the more confident they were in implementing EBP
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Conclusions

- More APNs and other EBP experts are needed to serve as EBP mentors for frontline RNs at university hospitals and other healthcare organizations
  - Currently, there are approx. 60 Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs) working at hospitals in the entire country, no Nurse Practitioners
  - APNs’ and other EBP Mentors’ main role should be to:
    - Guide & role model for frontline RNs exactly how they should go about implementing EBP in daily practice
    - Currently, Finnish APNs’ focus only on planning nursing staff education and streamlining healthcare care processes, instead of working with patients and clinical staff at direct patient care units

- Finnish frontline RNs’ actual EBP knowledge and their confidence in employing EBP must be strengthened to enable RNs to actually implement EBP in daily practice
- Finnish-language best evidence must be easily accessible and available in readily usable format at clinical practice settings
National survey of RNs at Finnish university hospitals (n=943): Next steps

- **Conduct international comparison studies** to compare the EBP readiness of Finnish RNs to that of RNs in other countries
  - Through using the same scientifically derived, theory-based, psychometrically strong EBP research instruments

- **Strengthen Finnish RNs’ self-efficacy**, i.e., confidence in implementing EBP in their own practice
  - RNs’ must have sufficient confidence levels in their own ability to employ EBP, before they are able to implement it in daily practice

- **Advance Finnish RNs’ EBP knowledge levels**, particularly their *actual* EBP knowledge
  - Through using rigorous, evidence-based, effectiveness-evaluated (in RCTs) educational interventions led by Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) and other EBP Mentors with expert-level EBP competencies
Questions or Comments? Thank you

Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.”

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