

Greek nurses and the implementation of Evidence based practice

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Editorial

The Human curiosity and the ability to observe and investigate the world around gave a significant impulse to human evolution. Initially, the use of sense was the most important instrument to examine everything and to give answers in most of the questions has been confronted with these observations. That was the beginning of the research. The research process acquires a reasonable and clear structure and adhesion that makes the research valid and reliable, transforming it into a process that leads to the production of scientific knowledge. The concepts of research and knowledge in human history are so interrelated that when someone mentions that he conducts research then automatically follow that produce knowledge and when someone mentions that produces knowledge then automatically assumes that this knowledge is the result of research. When someone applies the methodologies and principles of scientific thoughts then poses him in a critical thinking provided reliable knowledge that leads to credible answers and results.

Research in nursing began with Florence Nightingale and her interest in environmental factors that promote physical and emotional well-being. She was using evidence that had been produced through experimentation, observation and critical examination to improve patients' outcomes. She was started involved with the concept of evidence-based in practice (without this term to be known then) when she worked in military hospitals during the Crimean War, and then when she was asked by the British Government with a Sanitary Commission to manage and investigate the conditions at Scutari and improving the living conditions of soldiers [1]. Flipping through her book *Notes on Nursing*, the reader could discover best practice guidelines for health professionals and statistics which focused in different patient demographic data that improve patient health outcomes. Nightingale considered the pioneer of evidence-based practice within the nursing discipline [2]. It is obvious that cultural, social, economic and

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technological developments and the restructure of geo-cultural borders led to a reorganization of health care. The health care sector is a complex and ever changing environment and the challenges with implementing and sustaining changes are well-acknowledged. Furthermore, the context of healthcare synthesizes information from non-static sciences, and the rapid evolution of the biotechnology and bio research strongly influence the way in which healthcare have to be provided [3].

Health professionals should prove in their daily work, provided the appropriate service, at the right time, respected the individuality of the patient, using evidence-based approaches by reduced the inequities in quality and quantity of services and by reduced financial resources or healthcare expenditures, standardized practices, and enhanced practitioner job satisfaction and empowerment [4]. That importance in the improvement of the quality of healthcare could be covered by the evidence-based in practice. It promotes the decision-making based on the integration of the best evidence from research with the values and clinical circumstances of patients and the values of healthcare professionals [5,6]. Cochrane contended that randomized controlled trials provided the most reliable form of evidence. Healthcare professionals should use research results in everyday clinical practice so to promote the better common approach decision-making provided sufficient work [7]. Therefore, in the 21st century, the concept of "evidence-based practice" took dimensions of requirement and has an escalating importance either by health providers and stakeholders also by health service quality assessment throughout the developed world [8]. The requisition of "evidence-based practice" has made the rigorous use of the research steps to critically appraise research evidence very important in the health sector and the concept of "evidence-based" daily life for all health care professionals [9]. According to the International Council of Nurses, evidence-based practice in nursing is defined as *"a problem solving approach to clinical decision making that incorporates a search for the best and latest evidence, clinical expertise and assessment, and patient preference values within a context of caring"* [10].

In Greek healthcare sector, many nursing organizations or hospital settings have taken the initiative and created various practice guidelines [11, 12, 13], to help RNs more readily utilize the principles of evidence-based practice in patient care decision-making. Studies conducted with Greek nurses showed the requirement upon nurses to deliver care that is evidence-based but they reported low implementation of protocols or guidelines in their routinely care delivery [14, 15, 16].

Barriers to implement EBP may be both individual and organizational. Individual barriers include the nurses' knowledge and skills to transfer research results into practice, and improve outcomes, which are measurable and meaningful, while organizational barriers reflect the organizational culture including readiness and resources for change from traditional care delivery to evidence-based care [2]. Greek nursing studies are followed in university level. The professional educational program includes sessions of research methodologies, evidence-based

practice and biomedical ethics (four principles: respect for patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice) which are considered as integral part of EBP. But does the academic programs throughout the Greece as many faculty continue to teach students the rigorous process of *how to conduct research instead of how to use research and consistently implement evidence-based care* [17]?

Although many hospitals in Greece have produced protocols with the support of the Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) where it seems to believe in the value of evidence-based care, their own implementation of EBP is low [12, 13, 14],. Although the CNOs state that their highest priorities are quality and safety, EBP is not a top priority and very little of their budgets are allocated to implementing and sustaining evidence-based care [18].

According to Turkel et al (2008) to achieve the perfect level of practice, the nurse practitioner should create, cultivate, and insist on a practice setting where nursing research and evidence -based practice have be integrated in the nursing care and management for decision-making [19].

It is important to fill the gap between academic field and health professional setting that distribute the transfer of research results in daily practice. Therefore, nurses should always have in mind that EBP is “problem solving process according to the best decision-making that integrates best available evidence, clinical expertise, and patient preferences resulting in improved patient outcomes” [20].

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