

Resource review

Evidence-Based Nursing

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E*vidence-Based Nursing (EBN)* is a quarterly journal currently in its 7th year of publication with the BMJ Publishing Group and the Royal College of Nursing Publishing Company. This evidence-based resource is a high quality, international, abstract journal that provides access to the most rigorous nursing related research and helps clinicians to keep up to date. This journal summarises those studies that are valid and clinically useful. *EBN* is designed to alert practising nurses to important and clinically relevant advances in treatment, diagnosis, causation, and prognosis. The journal selects from the health related literature those study reports and reviews that warrant immediate attention by nurses.

The research staff at *EBN* uses the same methods and procedures as those for *Evidence-Based Medicine* to compile each issue. *EBN* selects original studies and reviews that represent the very best of international nursing research. Over 110 general medical, specialist, and nursing journals are scanned to identify clinically important research, including the meaning, cause, course, assessment, prevention, treatment, or economics of health problems managed by nurses. Both quantitative and qualitative research is included. Structured abstracts summarise 24 original studies and reviews, which are identified and appraised according to empirically derived criteria. Detailed information regarding selection criteria is available in the "Purpose and procedure" section in every issue. The abstracts are categorised as treatment, assessment, prognosis, causation, quality improvement, or qualitative. Each abstract clearly and concisely reports focused clinical questions, study methods, appropriate sampling methods, main results and evidence-based conclusions in a reproducible and accurate fashion. They also report the interventions, outcomes, and statistical findings that are meaningful to clinicians and their patients.

Each abstract is reviewed by an expert in the content area covered by the article. The experts write commentaries that compare study findings to previous research, identify any important methodological problems, and offer recommendations for clinical application. The commentary provides a clinical context for the article, draws out key research findings, and identifies implications for nurses. In addition, *EBN* publishes original editorials, resource information, and guides for users. Furthermore, the section "EBN Notebook" provides short articles about the research process. Topics include asking answerable questions, searching for the best evidence, and identifying the best research design to fit the question. These editorials use examples from the abstract summaries to illustrate concepts, providing an excellent teaching resource.

Free and unlimited access to *EBN* is available online to individuals and organisations that currently subscribe to the print version. Each issue of *EBN* online contains the full text of all abstracts of clinical studies, commentaries, and editorials and includes extra "web only" material. The advantage of *EBN* online is that it provides a fully searchable archive that contains direct links to the original published research report summarised in the abstract and to references cited in the commentary, with a facility to search the other 350 plus journals on HighWire Press. Since the January 2000 issue, all articles in *EBN* are assigned to topical areas grouped by specialty, originally devised for the electronic version of the BMJ. At present, over 250 collections cover clinical and non-clinical specialties related to nursing and the health sciences. The *EBN* website has a selected list of articles that passed all criteria but were not abstracted for the following reasons: (1) the findings were deemed by editorial consensus to be less applicable to general nursing practice, (2) the topic was of interest to only a select group of nurse specialists, or (3) the topic was recently addressed in another abstract. Readers who subscribe to *EBN* may also receive email alerts to keep informed of new research in their specific areas of interest.

Health professionals are expected to inform their clinical decisions with appropriate evidence from research, although at present only a moderate proportion of nurses uses research as a basis for practice. Within a healthcare environment that is frequently resource limited and time constrained, clinicians need to quickly and efficiently locate, critically appraise, and digest current research findings and apply them to nursing practice. Both the print and online versions of *EBN* are practical and effective evidence-based resource tools that can help meet these needs.

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RATINGS:

Methods/Quality of information: ★★★★★

Clinical usefulness: ★★★★★☆