EBP Nursing: Guidelines and Protocols

1. Welcome to part one of the Evidence-Based Practice Tutorial for Nursing students! This tutorial will define Evidence-Based Practice and demonstrate how you can find Guidelines or Protocols using a variety of sources and search strategies.

2. Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is patient care backed by research. It is an approach to practicing medicine with the goal of improving and evaluating patient care, and it requires integrating the best research evidence with the patient's values to make decisions about medical care.

3. There are three sources of research that are best for evidence-based practice:

    a. guidelines or protocols (secondary research)
    b. clinical studies or queries (original research)
    c. systematic reviews (secondary research)

4. A guideline or protocol is a precise and detailed plan for the study of a medical or biomedical problem and/or plans for a regimen of therapy.

5. We will begin by searching the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's National Guidelines Clearinghouse, then we will look at CINAHL Complete's Evidence-Based Care Sheets, and finally at Cochrane Library's selection of guidelines/protocols.

6. Let's begin by going to the Evidence-Based Practice: Nursing research guide made by your nursing librarian.

7. Click on the "Databases and Articles" tab. Here you will find a compilation of useful websites and databases for finding information on evidence-based practice.

8. Click on the link for the AHRQ National Guideline Clearinghouse.

9. Let's type in our sample search: "Intravascular catheter infection"

10. There are 33 results, and you can see that the first two are the most relevant to our topic. Note the publication dates -- 2011 and 2009. Let's click on the first result, published in 2011.

11. The first thing you see is the Guideline Summary. Skim through the guideline and take note of the sections. Clicking on one of these links will take you to that section in the guideline. Read it carefully and thoroughly when conducting your own research.

12. Now we'll return to the Databases and Articles Page on the EBP research guide. This time we'll click on the link for CINAHL Complete and search for guidelines and protocols in the CINAHL Evidence-Based Care Sheets.

13. It's important to access these databases from the SJSU library website so you'll have access to the full text of the articles.

14. Click on the link for the "Evidence-Based Care Sheets" at the top of the page in the blue bar. Type our search query — intravascular catheter infection — and click "Browse."

15. This is what your results will look like. Now check the box next to the first and most relevant "item" — "Intravascular Catheter Use and Prevention of Infection" — and click "Search."

16. We found one perfect result! With these care sheets, quality over quantity is what matters. You can either click on the title for a detailed record of the care sheet or click "PDF Full Text" for direct access to the Care Sheet.

17. Let's select the direct link to the PDF to see the Care Sheet for "Intravascular Catheter Use and Prevention of Infection."

18. Here is a glimpse of the first section. As you scroll down you'll see find there are three sections:

19. "What we know": information about the topic

20. "What we can do": suggestions for the medical practitioner

21. References: where the information on the care sheet originated from; these may be useful to look up

22. Keep in mind that not all subjects have a Care Sheet, so while this is a good resource, you always can't count on a sheet existing for your subject.

23. Now we'll move on to searching in the Cochrane Library for protocols. Go back to the EBP research guide and click on Cochrane Library.

24. Let's go directly to Advanced Search.

25. Type in "catheter-related infection" and then we'll select Abstract from the dropdown menu to limit our search to terms appearing in the abstracts of articles.

26. In the results list, scroll down until you see a result that has a light blue box that says "Protocol." This means you've found a protocol! Read the title of the protocol to make sure it's actually relevant to your topic.

27. Click on the title of the protocol to get the full record. To access the full text, click either "View Full Article (HTML)" or "Full (175K)" for the PDF

28. To review, a guideline or protocol is a precise and detailed plan for the study of a medical or biomedical problem and/or plans for a regimen of therapy.

29. To find guidelines or protocols, use:
AHRQ's National Guidelines Clearinghouse
CINAHL's Evidence-Based Care Sheets
Cochrane Library's guidelines/protocols

30. Good luck with your research!