Ovid® Synthesis

Prepare nurse residents for evidence-based practice with technology tools

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Executive summary

As the nursing profession continues to evolve to integrate evidence-based practice (EBP) and quality improvement (QI) into both daily work and the clinical ladder, much of the responsibility rests squarely on the shoulders of individual nurses, whether they have already provided decades of service or are new to practice. Nurse residency programs play an essential role in helping newly licensed nurses gain the proficiency and confidence they need to transition to practice from nursing students to professional nurses.

An important aspect of most nurse residency programs is the nurse resident evidence-based research project that they are required to carry out to address targeted clinical queries. However, there is still considerable variability from program to program regarding requirements and regulations. Lack of standardization among competing programs signals a missed opportunity for all stakeholders and may result in significant variation in the preparedness of the nurses who move through them. Using a centralized technology workflow solution – one designed to support EBP projects and QI initiatives – can elevate nurse residency programs and ensure that tomorrow's nursing workforce is both prepared to climb the clinical ladder from novice to expert in EBP and capable of incorporating EBP research and carrying out QI initiatives to improve outcomes.

Introduction

Ensuring that nurses are competent and empowered within their role is critical to optimizing patient clinical outcomes. The goal of any world-class nursing staff – whereby nurses bring the tenets of EBP and QI to bear with every patient interaction – is to address pressing issues that reduce clinical outcomes in healthcare. These include persistent problems such as hospital-acquired infections, hospital-related ulcers and falls, medication errors, hospital readmission rates, and more.

For nurses, the growing demand for increased reliance on EBP and QI requires new skill sets — specifically, the ability to frame targeted research queries effectively and carry out robust literature searches to identify new interventions and best practices as they emerge and then bring the data-driven findings to bear in their own hospitals and healthcare settings. For any nurse residency program, having the right technology framework in place is a critical part of supporting this preparedness journey for nurse residents and provides a variety of benefits to the faculty and advisors who mentor them, as well.

Today, nurse residency programs – which typically run from 6 to 12 months – are established in nearly half of all national hospitals. Such programs aim to help new-to-practice nurses build their knowledge base and core competency skills progressively over time, working closely with residency educators and mentors within the hospital or healthcare setting. Despite the popularity of these programs, there is considerable variability in terms of individual institutions and program facilitators' preparedness. Each faces the challenge of helping nurse residents develop the skills needed to carry out EBP and QI in all aspects of patient care while helping them foster a greater sense of

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independence as they move from novice to professional.

Inadequate or inconsistent oversight is also a common problem within nurse residency programs, as the educators and mentors are professional nurses themselves who often have their own time and resource constraints. Investing in the right technology – one that is designed to support nurses and their educators or mentors in their efforts to carry out thoughtful literature searches related to targeted research queries – provides an effective option for strengthening and standardizing nurse residency programs and supporting all stakeholders more effectively.

A wise investment

While implementing such a technology framework requires both leadership commitment and investment, the effort provides substantial payback. Consider the impact on hospitals and healthcare settings when operating in ways that yield substandard patient outcomes. When such institutions fail to meet certain metrics established by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), they incur enormous financial penalties in the form of reduced reimbursement rates.

In FY21, Medicare issued penalties resulting in an average reduction in payment of 0.64% for 82% of hospitals evaluated – reductions that will, over the next fiscal year, cost hospitals more than $521 million.[1] As so many of the CMS performance criteria can be improved by consistent reliance on EBP and QI, a world-class nursing workforce plays a direct and essential role in supporting the overall financial health of any hospital or financial institution.

Using technology to turn knowledge into skills

The PICOT model aims to articulate a targeted research query using a standard format that considers four key elements: Patient/Population/Problem, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, and Time. The ability to develop a thoughtful, well-crafted PICOT question is a critical first step in helping nurse residents pursue any EBP or QI project and ensure the success of the literature search that will be carried out to address the query.

Ovid® Synthesis workflow solution from Wolters Kluwer is a technology platform that is designed to streamline and automate all the steps required to develop the PICOT question, carry out the targeted literature search, synthesize the relevant evidence, and automate the process of disseminating the findings to a broader audience.

Through workflow templates customized specifically for each use case, Ovid Synthesis streamlines and automates all steps of PICOT question development and the literature search. It also provides embedded expert decision-support tools that guide residents through every step of the process. These user-friendly prompts are helpful not only for the nurse residents but also for educators and mentors who may have variable

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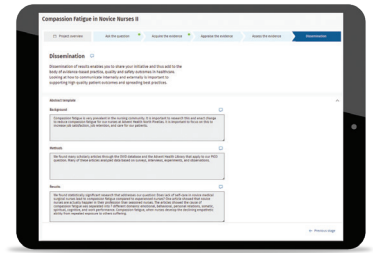
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Performance criteria can be improved by consistent reliance on EBP and QI, and a world-class nursing workforce plays an essential supporting role.

knowledge and experience with the type of research skills required to support today's robust EBP and QI initiatives.
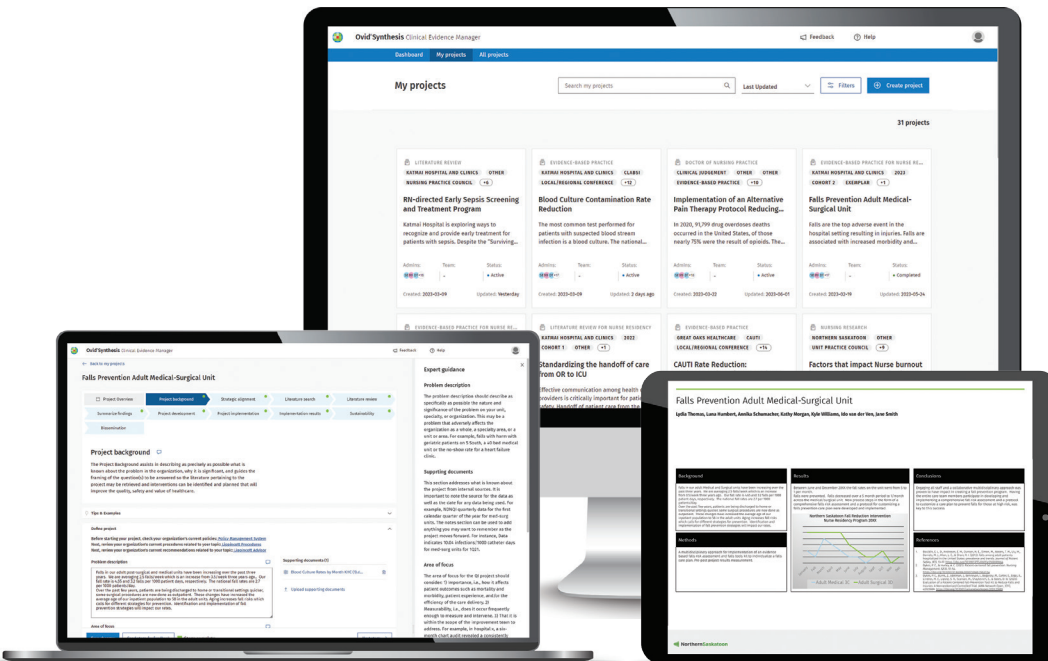
Ovid Synthesis automatically exports the critical information to a centralized evidence table that keeps all the findings in one place. Multiple stakeholders can access the evidence table at any time to enhance overall visibility and collaboration. This overview allows nurse residents working on a group project to collaborate efficiently. In addition, it helps educators and mentors to engage seamlessly with the nurse residents to provide feedback and guidance to keep research projects on track and organized.

Disseminating the research findings

As the sharing of findings is an essential part of driving continuous improvement in EBP and QI, Ovid Synthesis also streamlines and automates disseminating the findings for broader audiences to inform data-driven care and support the development of evidence-based nursing protocols at the institution. Specifically, Ovid Synthesis automates the process of sharing the research findings using a variety of standard templates, including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, poster, abstract and manuscript formats. This reduces manual effort, saves time, and improves overall quality through the use of standardized outputs.

Ovid® Synthesis streamlines and automates all steps of the PICOT question development, literature search and appraisal, evidence synthesis and dissemination.

Supporting transition to practice

As any nurse residency program may involve dozens or hundreds of nurses at any given time – at a single facility or across multiple locations – the use of standardized technology provides an important way to drive efficiency and visibility for the educators and mentors who oversee them. Through user-friendly dashboards, educators and

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mentors have oversight into all concurrent projects at any given time, helping them keep up with all of the activities and focus on those nurse residents or teams that may need extra attention. The centralized dashboard approach also helps project coordinators reduce redundancy among similar research projects initiated by nurse residents.

The solution also serves as a repository for exemplar projects needed when an institution is seeking Magnet® designation and the supporting accreditation survey processes. The goal of any nurse residency program is to ensure that the nursing workforce is prepared to uphold and expand the culture of EBP and QI in their day-to-day practice. Ovid Synthesis plays an integral role in ensuring that nurses are prepared to do so as they transition into practice, accelerating their research skills from novice to expert.

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Acknowledgment

References

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