Evaluation of evidence-based practice skills of healthcare staff following educational workshops: a study protocol.

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Background
• There is a lack of consensus within the current literature as to the effectiveness of short pragmatic literature searching and/or critical appraisal skills workshops on the competency of healthcare professionals (HCPs) in evidence-based practice (EBP).
• Systematic reviews on this topic have identified an increase in HCP’s knowledge and attitudes following participation in educational workshops, although the majority of the evidence has been assessed as being of poor quality.
• It is currently unclear what SingHealth HCP attitudes, skills, and behaviours in EBP are before the workshops and if they change after the workshops.

Objectives
This study will examine if the hypothesis that EBP workshops improve the attitudes, skills and behaviours of SingHealth HCPs over time is true.

Methods
Evaluation timeline:
• The timeline for evaluations is the key component of this study, being a before-and-after study design.
• Staff will be surveyed prior to the educational workshops to gauge baseline EBP attitudes and behaviours.
• Immediately after the workshops, staff will be given a test to measure the level of their newly acquired knowledge and skills.
• At 2, 6, and 12 months staff will be surveyed to gauge changes in EBP attitudes and behaviours. The first post-workshop survey starts 2 months after one of the surveys asks about EBP activities in the preceding 8 weeks. The 6 and 12 month time points were chosen as mid- and full-year points, respectively, in order to assess the sustainability of attitudes and behaviour change over a longer period.

Evaluation tools:
• Evaluation of staff attitudes, skills and behaviour will be measured using the Classification Rubric for EBP Assessment Tools in Education (CREATE) framework5 validated tools. This study uses the evidence-based practice and implementation scale (EBPNS)6, evidence-based beliefs scale (EBBS)7, and the Fresno Test8.
• The EBPI is an activity monitoring assessment of staff behaviours across all the EBP skills of ‘ask’, ‘search’, ‘appraise’, ‘integrate’, and ‘evaluate’. The EBBS is a self-reported / opinion measurement of staff self-efficacy across all the EBP skills. The Fresno Test is a performance assessment of skills.
• All ad hoc consultations on EBP-related projects by HCPs after the workshop will be noted as contributing to the application of EBP in practice.
• Figure 1 shows the flow of participants through the study and when the evaluations will be done.

Discussion / expected outcomes
This study will provide the following outcomes:
• Provide data on the effect of pragmatic literature searching and critical appraisal skills workshops on HCPs in SingHealth.
• Examine the impact of offering ad hoc consultations to staff in EBP.
• Provide data for developing a custom EBP survey, which will specifically examine barriers and enablers to EBP for HCPs.
• Utilise the survey data as a feedback mechanism for improving the content and implementation of learning formats and materials.
• Information on pre- and post-workshop survey response rates between web-based (SurveyMonkey™, BlackBoard Learn™), email, and hardcopy surveys delivered in person.
• Preliminary findings suggest follow-up with hardcopy surveys during other workshops results in a good response rate compared to electronic methods.

References

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