

GUEST EDITORIAL: Jai Chung

Assessing research is a vital skill in new masters-level nursing pathway

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Research is vital for nursing. In contemporary practice, nurses need to be able to justify decision-making by providing rationales based on evidence. I am a graduate of a new initiative in nursing education – a graduate-entry nursing pathway that combines the requirements for a bachelor of nursing with a masters-level nursing programme. This pathway provides a post-graduate bridge between previous degrees and a bachelor of nursing. It offers an intensive nursing curriculum, which prepares nurses to implement evidence-based practice.

Having a science background in my previous degree, I see this intensive programme as preparing registered nurses to think broadly and critically to integrate both science and art into optimal nursing care. Learning how to search for appropriate literature, and use critical appraisal skills to evaluate evidence for practice, contributes to effective nursing care for health consumers. The art of nursing is in being able to judge how this best evidence is consistent, or not, with health consumers' needs and preferences.

The professional and legal requirements of contemporary nursing practice oblige nurses to provide health consumers with optimal care and to ensure they are empowered to making informed choices about their care (Mazurek et al, 2014; Spruce, 2015). Having an intellectual curiosity about research offers nurses an exciting opportunity to explore the implications of using evidence-based practice in daily nursing care.

Use of evidence-based practice has the potential to become a bridge connecting nurses, health consumers and other health



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professionals. It can provide continuous refinements to nursing practice, and may lead to a growing confidence and maturity in the profession, along with an improved multidisciplinary team approach to providing care.

References

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