GOALS:
- Plan, develop, and disseminate instructional programs promoting information literacy skills among professional nurses working in a variety of settings as a precursor for research utilization and the promotion of evidence-based nursing practices (EBNP)
- Measure information use, attitudes and skills required for evidence-based practice among a selected subgroup of practicing nurses

SPONSORSHIP:
This project was sponsored and funded by:
- The George Washington School of Nursing Education graduate students
- The George Washington University Hospital
- Education and Professional Development department registered nurses,
- Maryland Association of School Health Nurses (2005 Annual Meeting)
- Health Services employees – Prince George’s County Public Schools, Prince George’s County, Maryland
- Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (2005 Annual Meeting)
- National Association of School Nurses (2005 Annual Meeting Pre-session Conference)
- The National Network of Libraries of Medicine - Southeastern/Atlantic Region (NN/LM-SE/A)
- Partners for Health Information Coalition – Greater Washington, D.C. metroplex
- Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library of The George Washington University

BACKGROUND:
The library identified the importance of information literacy, informatics and evidence-based nursing practice as key skills in today’s healthcare environment. Because nurses are the largest group of healthcare professionals, these skills were identified for this project.

METHODS:
This project uses a multi-faceted approach to develop information literacy skills and promote evidence-based practice among practicing nurses. The majority of participants attended instructional sessions lasting from 2 -6 hours. The topics covered in the sessions were:
- Definition of evidence-based nursing practice
- Role of information literacy in nursing practice in the 21st Century
- How EBNP differs from traditional nursing practice
- Types of resources available to inform nursing practice
- Quality resources for use in EBNP

A subgroup of nurses was also identified to participate in the measurement of attitudes and skills relating to information use in practice. During the past 6 months, the Principle Investigator:
- Obtained IRB approval
- Developed and facilitated instructional sessions
- Created and collected demographic and attitudinal questionnaires
- Distributed and collected pre-interventional surveys measuring information usage and skills

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OUTCOMES:
During the past 15 months:
- All participants were invited to attend instructional sessions
- 12 sessions were conducted
- 600+ nurses attended instructional sessions
- Selected subgroup of 20 participants:
  - Agreed to participate and gave informed consent
  - Completed a pre-interventional demographic and attitudinal survey
  - Survey data shows:
    - 100% female
    - 65% Caucasian, 20% African-American, 5% Asian, 10% Other
    - 5% Associate degree, 75% BSN degree, 20% MSN degree
    - 90% have been working in nursing for over 22 years
    - 75% working for current organization for 5+ years
- 95% felt knowledgeable using computers and technology in practice
- 100% acknowledged the need to access information to perform job successfully
- 100% described their use of information as above average or better
- 95% desired more training in information usage and skill building

FUTURE PLANS:
- Will continue to provide additional instructional sessions
- Will collect series of post-interventional survey data measuring information usage and skills

EVALUATION:
- For the majority of the participants, this was the initial introduction to the concept and principles of information literacy and evidence-based nursing practice
- This project has received exceptionally high ratings via session evaluations among participants
- Instructional programs continue to be requested for additional groups of nurses
- The data gathered from the selected subgroup has yielded new insights to the role of information access, usage and skill development in the practice of modern nursing practice
- Additional efforts should be devoted to addressing the information needs and abilities of practicing nurses