Capacity building for Evidence based practice in Ireland

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Background

- Building on the Sicily Statement (2009), evidence-based practice has grown throughout the world, with a strong community of international EBP champions and centres of excellence.

- However, consistency and progress has been hampered in Ireland by the lack of a unifying hub or network to connect the practitioners, educators and students of evidence-based practice.

- Recognising this gap, we consulted with international EBP enthusiasts and resolved to establish a network for evidence-based practice in Ireland to promote evidence-based practice throughout our healthcare system, with the ultimate goal of improving patient outcomes.
Aim: to promote evidence-based practice throughout our healthcare system, with the ultimate goal of improving patient outcomes.

- To build capability and leadership for EBP in Ireland
- To create a hub for EBP in Ireland
- To establish a network of EBP practitioners
- To establish a network of EBP educators/trainers
- To create international links and collaborations
- To agree core competencies for EBP education
- To integrate EBP into the curriculum of all healthcare professionals
Methods

- Baseline research on current EBP teaching in Ireland
- Training in EBP for healthcare staff
- Training of EBP educators
- Development of a competency framework
- Establishment of an EBP network
1. Baseline research on current EBP teaching in Ireland

- Literature review.
- Interviews with international experts.
- National survey with third level academic institutions.

Results:
- Publication of baseline research of EBP teaching in Ireland (UCC 2017) which showed positive attitudes towards EBP.
- The first three steps of EBP (ask, acquire, appraise) were taught more frequently in Ireland than steps four and five (apply, assess).
- A named EBP lead/champion was not identifiable within the majority of institutions.

Available at: https://health.gov.ie
2. Training in EBP for healthcare staff

- Training courses in EBP for multidisciplinary healthcare staff, ‘Introduction to evidence based practice’ in collaboration with the CEBM, Oxford.
- 3-day training provided to 50 healthcare professionals in November 2017 and March 2019.
- Focus on applying evidence to practice (implementation) and patient participation/ shared decision making.

“This has been an excellent course. I have developed skills that I hope to continue to develop and no longer fear. Thank you.”
3. Training of EBP educators

- Training of a cohort of EBP educators/trainers to teach EBP.


“Excellent workshop, would recommend it to everyone. Thanks to the wonderful facilitators, my new role models”.
4. Development of a competency framework

- Consultation events with regulators, accreditation bodies, researchers and educators.
- Analysis of health regulator requirements.
- Stakeholder consultation: 13 focus groups.
- Development of a competency framework.
- Policy makers, health service providers and the regulators of health professionals convened an implementation group to oversee dissemination and implementation.

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5. Establishment of an EBP network

Aims:
- To increase the capacity and use of evidence-based practice in Ireland.
- To foster a culture in the health and social care services that ‘evidence-based practice is how we do things around here’.

Objectives
- To raise awareness of EBP in the health service in Ireland.
- To connect the Network with other relevant groups in Ireland and other countries.
- To facilitate capacity building to enable delivery of EBP training programmes.
- To create opportunities to share methodologies and skills in EBP.
- To promote the inclusion of EBP in healthcare professional training and curricula.
- To empower practitioners to use an EBP approach in their profession.
- To communicate EBP in plain language to the wider community.
- To facilitate the translation of evidence into practice.

Evidence-based practice is how we do things around here!
Results

- Publication of baseline research of EBP teaching in Ireland, 2017.
- EBP Education Forum with educators, regulators and accreditation bodies, 2016 and 2017.
- 3-day training on ‘Introduction to evidence-based practice’ for multidisciplinary healthcare professionals in November 2017 and March 2019.
- EBP network launched, March 2019.

Available at: https://health.gov.ie
Limits:

- The inclusion of evidence-based practice is not currently mandatory in the curriculum of healthcare professionals in Ireland.

Conclusion:

- This project addresses the current lack of standardised EBP education and training in Ireland. The network will provide a hub for education, collaboration and dissemination with a multidisciplinary group of health professionals working in the Irish healthcare system.

- Through inclusion of evidence-based practice in the curricula of all healthcare professionals at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, we aim to build capacity and encourage the next generation of leaders in evidence-based healthcare in Ireland.

- By means of consultation with stakeholders, capacity building, and working in collaboration with regulators and policy makers, we can translate evidence into policy and real-world practice, to improve patient outcomes.
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