

The Art of Evidence Based Nursing

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Evidence-based practice: a definition?

- 14 (selected) definitions 1995-2000
- No commonality
- Some elements:
 - Best evidence
 - Individual patients
 - Groups of patients
 - Clinical expertise
 - Research
 - Problem solving
 - Clinical decision-making
 - Effectiveness of interventions
 - Patient values

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 Sackett et al., *British Medical Journal* 1996; p.71

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Evidence based practice \neq evidence
based medicine \neq evidence based
nursing \neq evidence based healthcare

- Evidence-based nursing:

“conscientious, explicit and judicious use of theory-derived, research based information in making decisions about care delivery”

 Ingersoll GL, *Nursing Outlook* 2000; 48: 152

What constitutes evidence?

- Knowledge derived from systematic research
 - Other forms of knowledge?
- Knowledge derived from specific research strategies
 - Hierarchies of evidence

Level of evidence	Study design
I	Evidence obtained from a systematic review of all relevant randomised controlled trials.
II	Evidence obtained from at least one properly-designed randomised controlled trial.
III-1	Evidence obtained from well-designed pseudorandomised controlled trials (alternate allocation or some other method).
III-2	Evidence obtained from comparative studies (including systematic reviews of such studies) with concurrent controls and allocation not randomised, cohort studies, case-control studies, or interrupted time series with a control group.
III-3	Evidence obtained from comparative studies with historical control, two or more single arm studies, or interrupted time series without a parallel control group.
IV	Evidence obtained from case series, either post-test or pretest/post-test.

Often criticised:

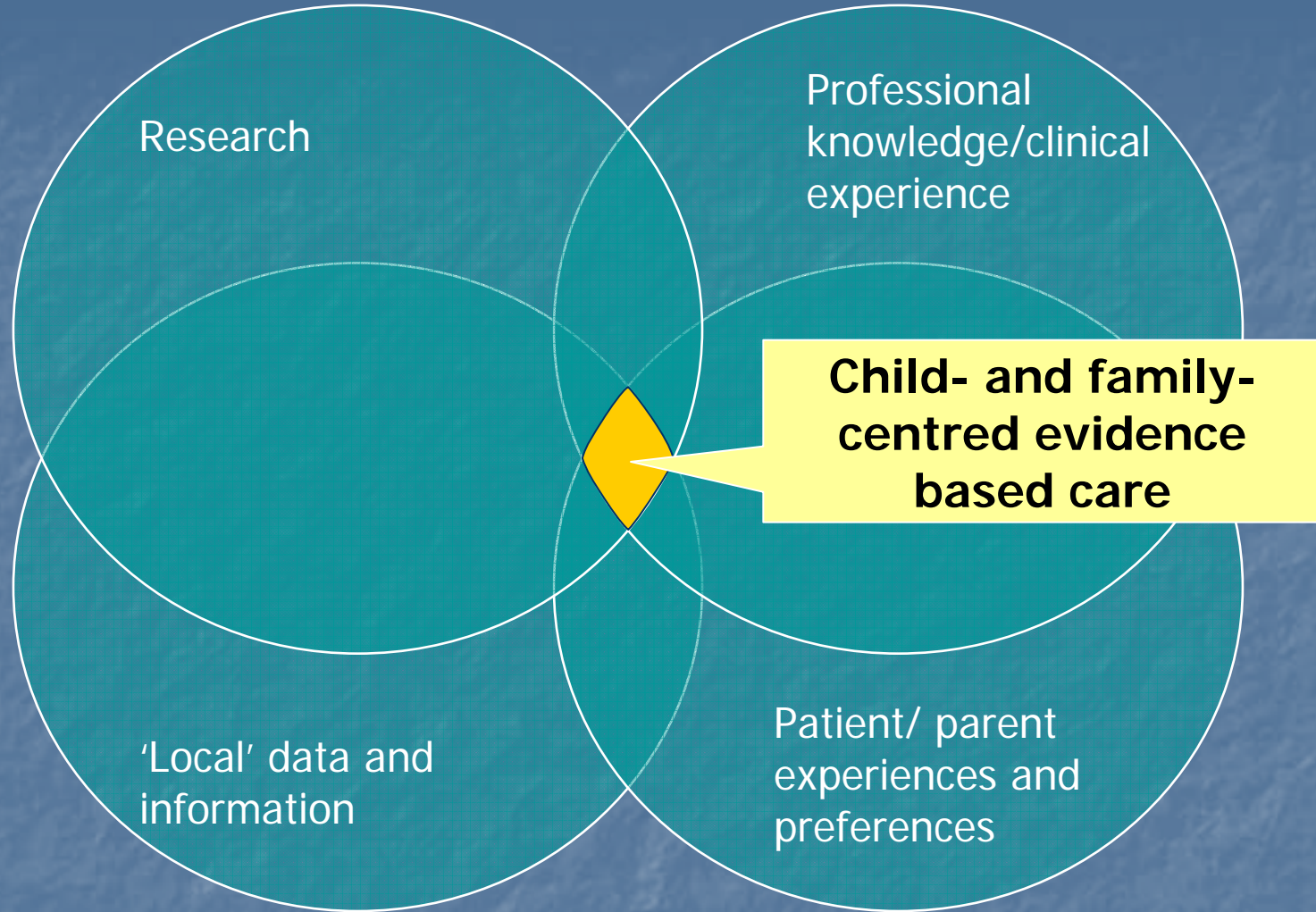
- Applicable only to assessment of interventions
- Exclude:
 - Diagnostic*
 - Prognostic*
 - Aetiological*
 - Screening*
 - Qualitative research
 - Basic science
- * New hierarchies created, currently being piloted

What is wrong with hierarchies?

- Usage vs intent
- An excuse *not* to change practice
- Reviews that only include RCTs may create, rather than reduce, bias
- Most reviews exclude more studies than they include

Other concerns

- Emphasis on aggregated data
 - At odds with holistic care tailored to individual patients
- Assumption that findings can be generalised across contexts
 - Knowledge of local conditions
- Role of expertise?
- Patient values?



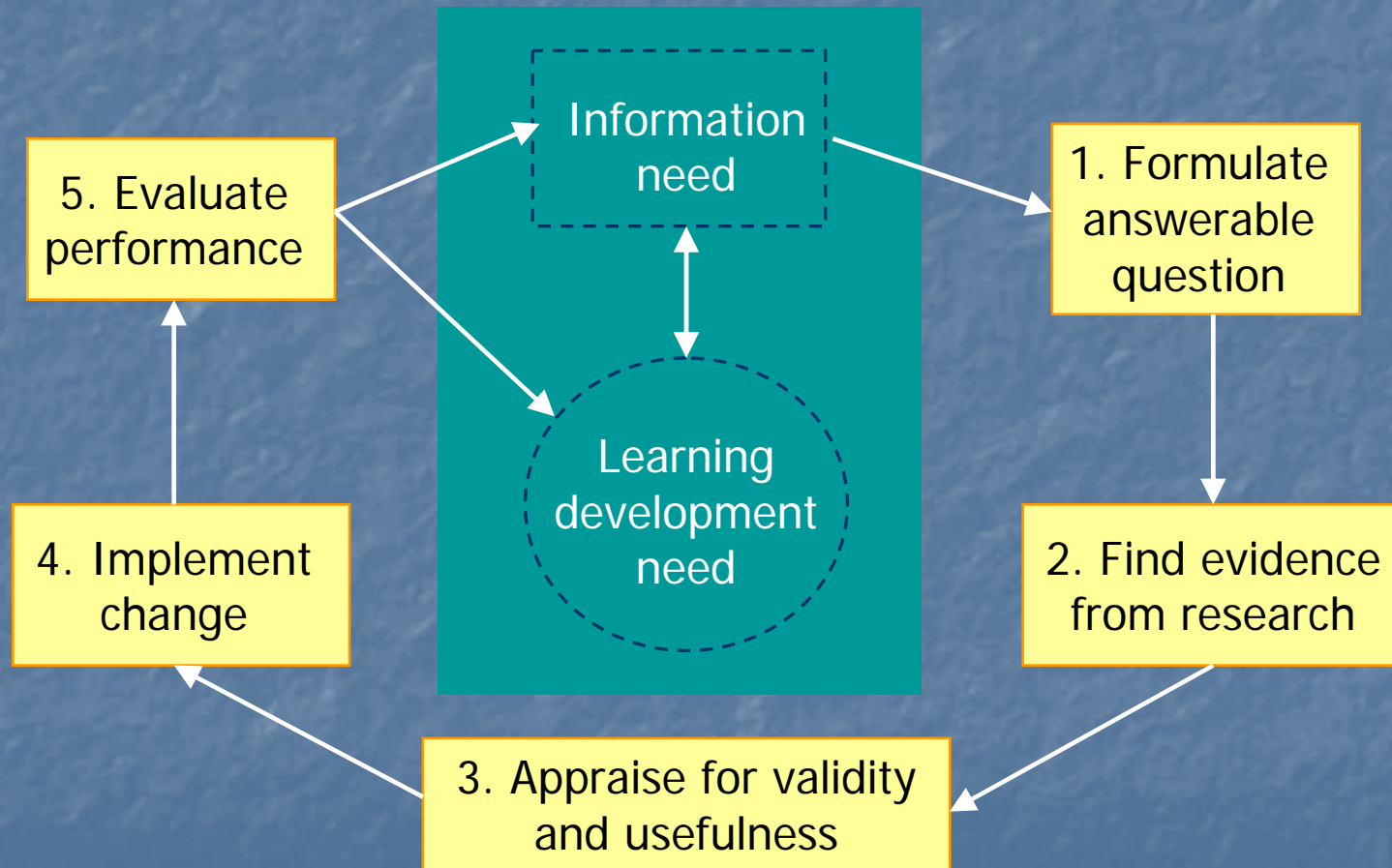
Adapted from Rycroft-Malone et al., *J Adv Nurs* 2004; 47:81-90

■ A form of professional artistry

- Critical appreciation
- Synchronicity
- Balance
- Interplay

“As we are not entirely clear how this occurs, we also do not know how best it could be facilitated”

Process of EBN



Formulate an answerable question

- How do we decide to ask the question?
 - prioritising
- Emphasis on problem-solving
 - “If it ain’t broke don’t fix it”?
 - How do we know it’s not broken?
- Stimulants to questioning practice
 - Discovering alternatives
 - Mixing with other nurses; visiting other units; reading journals
 - Reflective practice

Find and appraise evidence


- Access
 - Databases
 - Journals
- Search skills
- Appraisal/critiquing skills
 - Research knowledge
- Determining applicability
 - Particular patient or context

Implement change

- Change is complex
- Acceptance and resistance are not simple, defined responses
- Organisational culture
- Professional culture
- Nature of the practice to be changed
- Nature of the evidence
- Presence of change facilitators

Why Evidence-Based Nursing?

"...the success of EBP activities will be marked by the degree to which practice is influenced and changed as a result."

 Aranda, S. *Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing* 1999; 16(4): 5-6

Is EBN an end in itself?

Outcomes not process

- Health outcomes
 - Mortality
 - Disability
 - Freedom from pain
 - Peaceful death
 - Parent satisfaction
 -
- Staff satisfaction/development/growth
- Economic benefits
- Efficiency

Evidence-based practice?
or
Quality improvement?



- Quality improvement strategies should be evidence-based
- Implementation of evidence requires quality evaluation
 - Are the intended outcomes achieved?

“It is not good enough for us to assume that simply because we have applied evidence to our practice that it has actually made a difference”

What is the art of evidence based nursing?

Making a measurable difference

Examination of processes is useful to increase understanding and facilitation but should never replace the examination of outcomes