

WORLD NURSING EDUCATION AND EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE CONFERENCE

August 20-21, 2018 Osaka, Japan

Evidence Based Decision Making in nursing: A concept analysis

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Low implementation of Evidence Based Decision Making (EBDM) among nurses in Malawi possesses a great risk for effective nursing care delivery. This compromises provision of safe, effective and quality care. The purpose of this Concept Analysis (CA) was to clarify the concept of EBDM to promote mutual understanding among nurses and provide precise operational definition in nursing care delivery. Walker and Avant's strategic method of CA was used to analyze EBDM concept. The framework comprised of seven steps: Selecting the concept; determining the aims of the analysis; identifying uses of the concept; determining, defining attributes; constructing a model, borderline and contrary case; identifying antecedents and consequences and defining empirical referents. EBDM is defined as the process of applying research evidence in combination with clinical expertise in making nursing care decisions while integrating patients' desires. EBDM comprises of the following attributes: gathering evidence; interpreting evidence and applying what has been learned from evidence in making nursing care decisions. Prior to EBDM, antecedents are: An answerable clinical question, availability of evidence and necessary equipment, nurses with necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to access evidence. This will eventually lead to anticipated consequences like: Safe, effective, cost-effective, quality care which can lead to desired patient outcomes. In conclusion, this analysis has clarified the definition and the approach to EBDM as gathering evidence; interpreting evidence and applying what has been learned from evidence in making nursing care decisions. However, further studies are needed to try out the actual EBDM process and its attributes.

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