

# Creating Opportunities to Link Academia and Organizations Through Research



Kelly A. Kuhns, PhD, RN

Associate Professor and Chair, Millersville University, Millersville, PA

## Abstract

Connecting academia and organizations through evidence-based practice and research processes provides educators with a unique opportunity to create a trajectory of teaching and learning experiences. By creating collaborative opportunities within an RN to BSN curriculum, we have been able to realize a significant bridge between the academic – practice gap.

In the present project, students in an RN to BSN Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research course are encouraged to analyze evidence-based practice questions that are pertinent to their own work setting. Students are encouraged to discuss organizational priorities with their peers and supervisors to find a topic that will be applicable in their work setting. At the completion of the evidence-based practice project, the course instructor encourages students to consider continuation of the project as a translation and/or research project within their institutions. Further, the course instructor offers to work with the student in the role of research consultant to help the project progress. Currently, the author has several ongoing projects that began as student evidence-based practice projects and have now been approved as research studies within the students' workplace.

There are numerous benefits to this partnership. First, registered nurses who engage in evidence-based practice translation and nursing research are continuing to develop their own knowledge about the process and the topic of interest, as well as contributing to the elevation of the profession as a whole. Second, the organization benefits from the ongoing research and the commitment to bring evidence to the bedside. Finally, the individual faculty member is afforded the opportunity to continue a robust research agenda, as well as continuing to remain abreast of new clinical initiatives.

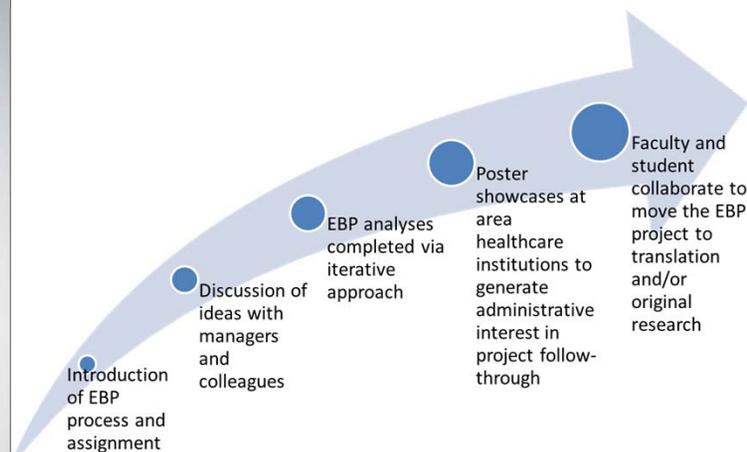
This poster highlights one project in which a student completed an evidence-based practice project regarding the use of music to decrease falls among hospitalized dementia patients that is now progressing as a quasi-experimental study within the student's workplace, with the student as the primary investigator.

*This project exemplifies the unique opportunities that can be created to bridge the education-practice gap.*



Rockville, PA Longest Stone Arch Bridge in the world

## The Process



## Keys to Success



## The Effect of Musical Interventions on Dementia Patients

### Project Example

#### Student's PICO Question:

In geriatric dementia patients, what is the effect of music therapy on mood and behavior compared with no music therapy?

#### Findings:

Evidence supported the use of music interventions as an alternative, low-cost, low-risk treatment options. Specifically, falls and caregiver burnout were noted to be effected in several studies.

#### The Bridge:

Student asked the faculty member to help design an intervention study to be carried out on the unit where the student worked. Based on the evidence, the student wanted to examine the effect of music therapy on fall rates, as well as nurses' perception of effectiveness of the intervention.

Student and faculty met with a group of interested registered nurses, including the nurse ally and the nurse manager to discuss the potential study. Based on organizational priorities, the nurse manager asked that incidence of one-to-one care, benzodiazepine use, and length of stay also be considered.

In order to address all the areas of interest, a mixed methods study was developed and submitted to the organization's institutional review board.

#### Research Questions:

- Does the implementation of music therapy decrease falls, use of one-to-one care, benzodiazepine use, agitation level and/or length of stay?
  - Frequency of falls, one-to-one, benzodiazepine, and length of stay use will be assessed through institutional data
  - Agitation will be assessed using the Pittsburgh Agitation Scale at the start and completion of music therapy
- Is there a change in registered nurse perception of patient behaviors when music therapy is utilized?
  - Will be assessed through the use of voluntary focus groups after the completion of the three month music intervention pilot

#### Current Status:

- Has been reviewed by the organization's IRB and revisions are pending
- The student has since left the institution for a new opportunity; however, another student has expressed interest in joining and championing the research project
- Expect to begin data collection in May/June