

**Multi-Method Educational Program To
Train Clinicians and Managers in
Evidence-Based Practice Tools and Methods**

**Bonnie J. Wakefield, PhD
VA Medical Center; Iowa City, IA**

BACKGROUND / RATIONALE:

Evidence-based practice results in cost-effective care and improves patient outcomes. While there is a large body of research on effective interventions and numerous guidelines have been produced, clinicians and managers have been slow to adopt the findings from these studies for several reasons.

OBJECTIVE (S):

The immediate goal of this initiative is to facilitate evidence-based practice to improve care for veterans. The long-term goal of this initiative is to establish a nationally recognized Evidence-Based Practice Clinical Center of Excellence (referred to subsequently as "Center") in VISN 23 to enhance the clinical care provided to veterans, increase research funding, and become a model for academic-practice collaboration in evidence-based practice for the VA.

METHODS:

The following strategies will be implemented to attain the immediate goals.

1. Provide training to clinicians and managers in evidence-based practice tools and methods using a variety of educational approaches;
2. Facilitate the adoption of evidence-based practice by providing intensive consultation using a structured approach;
3. Promote multi-site evidence based practice initiatives (both multi-center and across care settings, e.g., Primary Care and Extended Care); and
4. Facilitate evidence based practice research across VISN sites.

STATUS:

Four sites have been initially selected to test an evidence-based practice protocol. Initial training has been provided, and Center staff is working with sites to design the implementation, identify barriers and facilitators, select outcomes variables and instruments, and validate availability of organizational measures. A standard set of organizational variables (e.g., organizational culture; skill

mix); patient outcome measures (e.g., physical function) and resource use indicators (length of stay, clinic visits) and instruments will be used to test the effectiveness of the evidence-based practice protocols and enable multi-site comparisons. A standard checklist will also be developed to determine how the evidence-based practice protocol was adapted for use in the local setting.

IMPACT:

Although evidence based care is endorsed by such agencies as the JCAHO and VA Headquarters, many clinicians have not been trained and have few tools on a daily basis to implement evidence based care. The Center will facilitate and support evidence-based care by providing tools, resources, and hands-on consultation to accomplish evidence-based care and facilitate collaboration across facilities and service lines within the VISN. The Center will be led by a Steering Committee selected from VISN leadership.

PUBLICATIONS: None at this time.