Evidence In Action
At Northwestern Health Sciences University

Spring 2011

Evidence Informed Practice at Northwestern is defined as the integration of patient presentation and preferences, clinical experience, and research in healthcare delivery.

Research Scholars I Spotlight: Dr. Verena VanFleet

Dr. Verena VanFleet is a Basic Sciences faculty member: instructor of Biochemistry I and II (Chiro), Immunology & Clinical Microbiology (Chiro), Pathophysiology I and II (CAOM) at Northwestern. She took part in the first Research Scholars I program in the fall of 2010. The goal of the Research Scholars I program is to enhance participants’ skills in efficiently finding, appraising, and using research that is relevant to their responsibilities at NWHSU.

Tell us about your experience in Research Scholars.
It was great to have 2 hours per week blocked out for my own education. The interdisciplinary nature of the group was very refreshing, and it was nice to get to know some faculty members I did not know at all or not well. In addition, the interesting discussions were stimulating, have raised my awareness of certain issues, and have lingered on my mind.

How do you use EIP in the classroom?
-Poster presentations in Immunology & Clinical Microbiology (Chiro T4 course) require students to find and appraise evidence
-Questions that assess students understanding of research and evidence (in the same course)
-Spontaneously, when topics arise in class

What are your big "take aways" from the Research Scholars Program?
I am amazed how much inspiration two hours per week (where I am not busy with course or committee work) for 3 months created. I have been pondering how I could achieve that in the future. The focus of my capstone project has lead to some changes in how the poster project is laid out to the students as well as how it is being assessed. I am also submitting an abstract to the International Association of Medical Science Educators and hope to present a poster on my capstone project at their annual conference in June.

What are your sources for keeping up to date in your field?
-BioMed Central (BMC): weekly list of open access publications on 'Chemical Biology, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Complementary and Alternative Medicine'

Upcoming Events

Presentations
04/15/2011, Active Learning Workshop, Barry Taylor & Roni Evans, Symposium for Portland Area Research on Complementary and Alternative Medicine (SPARC), Portland, OR.
04/16/2011, Evidence Informed Practice based interactive scenario about clean needle technique, Corrie Vihstadt, SPARC, Portland, OR.
04/16/2011, Evidence Informed Practice Fellowships at a Complementary and Alternative Medicine Institution, Brent Leininger & Linda Hanson, SPARC, Portland, OR.

EIP Events at Northwestern
05/20/2011, Foundations of Evidence Informed Practice, Integrative, Massage daytime, and Massage evening courses for students begin at Northwestern.
05/12/2011, 2nd cohort of Research Scholars I faculty development program begins.
7/2011, Research Scholars II applications due. Watch for information on how to apply! The program will go from September-December 2011.

Highlights!
Ten faculty members
Applications of EIP in an Integrative Setting

Lori Baldwin, LAc, MOm, is a graduate of the Volunteers of America (VOA) EIP Fellowship and lead instructor for the newly formed VOA Student Internship at Northwestern’s College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM). Lori and her interns utilize EIP to inform all patient encounters at a VOA nursing home in Edina where the majority of treatments focus on musculoskeletal complaints, insomnia, depression, and improving quality of life. "We rely on EIP as an additional tool in our AOM assessment for care, in treatment planning, and to ensure we are up-to-date on current research evidence and best practices in addressing the residents’ health complaint,” Lori says. "It acts as a checks and balance process to guide us in formulating a high quality treatment for each resident."

Since starting at the VOA, Lori is often approached by staff members for information on AOM as it pertains to a health complaint for themselves, a family member, or a resident at the nursing home. Lori sees that an evidence-informed approach enhances her practice and students confidence through a process that offers patients up-to-date, high quality care. "This process assists the interns in building a reputation as a quality clinician in their field that patients seek out and trust for their expertise and skillful care,” Lori says. "As western medicine, CAM medicine, and the healthcare industry actively implement evidence informed approaches to patient care, practitioners who attain and actively practice this process will be in alignment with this innovative medical movement. The ability to ‘speak a common language’ will open new opportunities for AOM practitioners and for the AOM profession to play a larger and more integral role in patient health and the healthcare system.”

completed the first Research Scholars I program last fall.

Five Research Scholars I participants presented at the February and March Faculty Conferences at Northwestern. The presenters in February were Ryne DeVries, DC, and Barb Gosse, LAc, MOm and presenters in March were Louise Delagran, MA, MEd, Sarah Gottfried, NCTMB, and Joanie Holst, NCTMB

Michele Maiers, MPH, DC, and Barry Taylor, DC, presented "Evidence Informed Practice: at Work in the Real World" at the Northwestern Chiropractic Homecoming on February 5, 2011.

Three faculty members, Barry Taylor, DC, Linda Hanson, DC, and Brent Leininger, DC, from Northwestern presented on EIP related topics at the Association of Chiropractic Colleges Research Agenda Conference in March, 2011.

EIP Mugs: If you have completed Track 1 and have not received a mug, please contact Kristin Swartz at kswartz@nwhealth.edu or at ext. 594.

11 individuals have been selected to participate in the second Research Scholars I program this summer.