

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Reader Appreciates Articles on Evidence-Based Practice

I would like to compliment the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing* on the addition of the recent evidence-based practice articles, which began with "Putting Evidence Into Practice: Prevention of Infection" by L.J. Zitella, C.R. Friese, J. Hauser, B.H. Gobel, M. Woolery, C. O'Leary, and F.A. Andrews (Vol. 10, pp. 739-750). These types of articles are a true asset to practicing nurses in the "front line" of oncology nursing care. The information provided in this feature article is very pertinent to me and other cancer care nurses in all settings.

The review of literature and the easily accessible information detailed in this article provide a wonderful resource. The article covered many issues and concerns related to treating patients with cancer. The broad spectrum of information needed to manage the unique needs of specialty patients can be very challenging. This article provided sound, evidence-based information covering all aspects of caring for neutropenic patients. Such sound, evidence-based nursing practice articles will help oncology nurses to make "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of people" (Institute for Healthcare Improvement [IHI], 2007).

Oncology nurses in clinical practice, research, and education as well as patients will benefit from these types of articles. "There have been systematic efforts to synthesis [sic] existing evidence to help bridge the gap between research findings and clinical practice" (Rakel,

2007). This type of evidence-based article will be a great tool for all nurses across the continuum of cancer care because it provides the needed information to ensure that the best medical care is given to our specialty patients. Information found in such an article will encourage the use of evidence-based practice, which ultimately will lead to improved patient outcomes. It raises oncology nurses' awareness of current trends and issues pertinent to cancer care.

Numerous national healthcare agencies are encouraging the use of evidence-based practice to ensure quality patient outcomes. The Joint Commission has instituted performance measurement initiatives. Examples include the core measures of heart failure, pneumonia, and acute myocardial infarction. The Joint Commission's (2007a, 2007b) accredited programs include the National Quality Forum's implementation of standards for nursing-sensitive care. The IHI's recent 100,000 Lives Campaign is now being followed with the addition of the 5 Million Lives Campaign. Those campaigns are helping to ensure that patients receive the highest level of care (IHI, 2007). The Institute of Medicine and National Academies (2007) are holding roundtable discussions and bringing together patients, healthcare providers, payers, policy makers, and researchers to improve and develop the effectiveness of patient care. Their focus is evidence-based practice. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) also recognizes the need for evidence-based practice with the development of best practice initiatives. Evidence-based practice truly has become a healthcare movement.

Having worked as an oncology nurse for more than 15 years, I have found that the Oncology Nursing Society's publications always have offered the best resources for practice information. Graduate school has increased my awareness of the connection among theory, research, and practice. As the authors stated, "Nursing-sensitive outcomes validate the value and effectiveness of nursing practice and help nurses demonstrate their contributions to quality care" (Zitella et al., 2006, p. 739). Taking the initiative to keep current with this continually changing and improving area of nursing is a challenge to each of us. These types of articles will help each of us to meet that challenge. I look forward to reading future evidence-based articles and using the resources and information found in them.

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