

Critical Thinking

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The only rule of journal club is you can talk about journal club!

Introduction

Journal club is the sharing of contemporary knowledge and appraising the value of that knowledge for applications in clinical practice.¹ In the past journal clubs aimed at nurses have encountered a number of issues such as poor attendance, lack of understanding and lack of critiquing skills.^{2,3} A physical and virtual journal club was designed to make it accessible for everyone, so shift-patterns, childcare and academic level would not hinder participation. The goal is to encourage and empower nurses to read, understand and question research evidence. Expanding our knowledge helps us grow and develop as healthcare professionals. It also aids in bridging the research-practice gap and ensuring delivery of evidence-based care.⁴

Methods

Through partnership between an ICU nurse and a Clinical Librarian, a bi-monthly journal club was started in late 2014, taking place over a lunchtime period on the local unit. Nursing staff choose topics and papers for critical appraisal and discussion. During the club, the group discuss the paper(s) and reflect on local practice. After the meeting a summary is added to the virtual site, www.criticalthinkingjc.co.uk, so the discussion can continue for people unable to attend.



Virtual journal club



Results

Journal club started with a low attendance, but it continues to grow steadily. The virtual club can be viewed freely online, once registered, allowing users to participate in discussion and use resources added to the site. After a high point, earlier this year of over 100 users, registered user numbers are now relatively steady at approximately 70, due to the removal of spam user accounts and normal unit staff turnover.



A wide range of topics have been discussed, including:

- Intensive Care Diaries
- Burnout / Communication
- Early mobilization
- Organ donation
- Use of Quetiapine
- Targeted temperature management

Sessions are now being led by other members of the ICU multidisciplinary team and attendance at journal club has been built into the induction programme for new starters in the unit. Additional sessions have been incorporated into team study days and journal club attendance has helped nursing staff gain participatory CPD hours for revalidation. The CL involved in Critical Thinking has developed a closer working relationship with more members of the nursing and allied health team in ICU and has consequently been able to provide these staff with more CL services at other times. The CL also provides support to a number of other journal clubs in the Trust, all run on slightly different lines, according to clinical team preference. Some of these journal clubs have expressed an interest in the virtual website and one department is has looked at developing their own virtual version. We are currently investigating methods of more robust evaluation of the impact of journal club, and we are delighted that feedback has been very positive.

Conclusions

- Verbal feedback is very positive.
- Attendance is improving after a slow start. Club attendance now built into unit training programmes.
- The virtual site needs further promotion, development and educational input. Additional measures regarding security and spam users are currently being undertaken.
- More people have begun to lead sessions, sharing duties, increasing learning and easing workload on the journal club leads.
- We are sharing our knowledge and experience with other teams interested in our physical/virtual model.
- Further robust evaluation of impact is required. We are now beginning to gain statistical data from the virtual site and we're investigating other evaluation methods for the club, including questionnaires and focus groups.

References

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