

Evidence Based Medicine: A Tool of Future Physician

**Dhairya Lakhani¹,
Swapnil S Bumb²**

¹Intern, Dhiraj General Hospital, Affiliated with Smt. B. K. Shah Medical Institute & Research Centre, Sumandeep Vidyapeeth University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India, ²Post Graduate Student, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Teerthanker Mahaveer Dental College & Research Centre, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, India.

E-mail: dhairyalakhani@gmail.com; swapnil_bumb@yahoo.com

Evidence-based medicine (EBM) has been defined as “the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients [which involves] integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research”.¹ It affects both patient outcomes and trainees’ practice-based learning and improvement.^{2,3} Its importance is reflected in an interdisciplinary panel convened by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) that recommended all health care trainees and professionals practice EBM.⁴

Although US and Canadian medical school accreditation standards include the acquisition and practice of EBM skills,⁵ research-based literature on undergraduate medical education training in EBM is sparse. A review by Maggio et al. of 2006 to 2011 publications characterizing worldwide EBM educational initiatives with medical students also suggested that educational setting, learner level, instructors in general, skills covered, and teaching methods varied greatly across educational interventions.⁶

A study by Maria, et al. suggests that Medical educators, in collaboration with librarians, need to examine how schools might overcome barriers in developing, implementing, and assessing an EBM curriculum. Furthermore, clinicians might partner with librarians and other health professionals to standardize a definition of and training in EBM. Senior academic leaders should introduce clear, quantifiable instructional time for EBM within and across curricula.

Finally, national professional groups—such as the AAMC-GEA, the Society of Directors in Medical Education Research (SDRME), and AAHSL—might offer grant opportunities to promote inter-institutional collaborations in EBM education and increase rigorous program evaluation approaches to EBM learning outcomes.⁷

Thus, to implement the EBM in future practice the first focus of all the medical schools should be in developing, implementing and assessing an EBM curriculum.

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