

Over the last couple of decades, there has been an increased effort internationally to support assessment techniques and interventions as they relate to all aspects of medicine. The term evidence-based medicine has evolved as an approach to improving practice efficacy. Among other variations of this term are "evidence-based practice" and "evidence. based health care." Sackett and colleagues (1996), considered one of the forefathers of evidence-based medicine, coined the phrase and defined it as "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients. It means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research." In other words, when incorporating the evidence into clinical practice, one should use a systematic approach toward reviewing peer research data so that unbiased clinical decision making can occur (Belanger 2002). The bottom line is that EBP is the integration of clinical expertise, patient values, and the best research evidence into the decision making process for patient care. Clinical expertise refers to the clinician's cumulated experience, education and clinical skills. The patient brings to the encounter his or her own personal preferences and unique concerns, expectations, and values. The best research evidence is usually found in clinically relevant research that has been conducted using sound methodology. (Sackett D, 2002)