Research Evidence in Health Sciences

This module runs twice per academic year and offers health professionals an opportunity to develop the skills required for evidence-based practice. The module builds on their understanding of healthcare theory and research by developing skills in formulating a review question, systematically searching for, critically appraising and synthesising the extant literature with a view to advancing clinical practice.

Credits: 15 credit points at level 7 (Masters level)

Jordanstown Campus

Semester One: starting Monday 21 September 2015
OR Semester Two: starting Monday 25 January 2016
Programme outline
The module will be delivered fully online via Blackboard Learn, the University’s online distance learning medium. This will involve screencast lectures, resources and activities supported by online discussion sessions. The total number of student effort hours for the module is 150. Students, therefore, are required to study for at least two evenings, or a full day, each week.

Professional body accreditation
The following professional body has endorsed the module: Society of Radiographers.

Introduction
There is an emphasis throughout healthcare on an evidence-based approach to clinical practice. Practice should be underpinned by sound evidence in order to ensure that the interventions used are the most effective and safest options. Critical appraisal of research evidence can inform decisions from which diagnostic test to use right through to which rehabilitation programme is most appropriate, thereby impacting on patient diagnosis, prognosis, treatments and rehabilitation. The aim of this module is to help healthcare professionals develop skills in using research evidence to inform practice. It develops the student’s understanding of healthcare research and skills in critically appraising extant literature to address problems and advance practice.

Who should attend?
Health professionals who want to develop skills in critically appraising research evidence for evidence-based practice.

Course content
• Introduction to healthcare research: theories and principles; different types of clinical research question
• Quantitative research methods: RCTs; cohort and case control studies; single case studies; surveys
• Qualitative methods: interviews; focus groups; unstructured observation - including sampling, saturation, reflection, analysis and interpretation
• Evidence-based practice: argument for healthcare to be evidence-based; formulating questions; finding research evidence; different types of research evidence; hierarchy of research evidence; systematic review
• Critical appraisal: exploration of critical appraisal tools; interpreting and making sense of data presented in published research; synthesising and reporting research evidence.

Assessment
There are three elements of assessment. Students must pass each element in order to pass the module.
(i) Online Learning Activities (Pass/Fail)
(ii) Critical appraisal of 3 research published papers (100%)
(iii) Critical Reflection (Pass/Fail)
Coursework submission dates: Semester one 9 December 2015 Semester two 27 April 2016

Further Information
Module/Course Co-ordinator – Dr Helen Irvine ch.irvine@ulster.ac.uk
Module Code – OTH814 CRN - 6053 (semester 1) / CRN - 6054 (semester 2)
www: science.ulster.ac.uk/health

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