

Presentation Title: "Implementing a Clinical Scholars Internship: A Demonstration Project"

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Purpose and Rationale:

Professional nurses in all settings and at all levels are expected to engage in research and evidence based practice to guide clinical decisions and expand nursing's knowledge base. Yet barriers impeding nurses' participation in research-related scholarly activities are well cited in the literature (Carlson CL, Plonczynskid J, 2008). These include: confusion in differentiating research, evidence based practice, and CQI activities; the research "fear factor;" inexperience with research processes; time and commitment constraints among staff nurses; competing management priorities; limited project management skills; education budget constraints; and inadequate mentoring and support systems. To compound the problem, direct care nurses often have difficulty seeing the relevance of research to practice. Often, they struggle to connect their lived clinical experiences to the "burning questions" which are the catalyst for research and evidence based practice projects.

One community hospital's innovative solution was to design and implement a customized Clinical Scholars Internship Program that produced two IRB-approved research proposals and five evidence based practice change recommendations in just eight months.

This presentation describes the conceptual framework derived from theories of organizational change and adult learning that guided development of the Internship. The presentation highlights five evidence based practice changes proposed by the Internship teams.

Sample posters from the projects will be available for display. Each poster demonstrates the relevant synthesis and review of literature, methods and results of an individual project.

Carlson C.L. & Plonczynski D. J. (2008) Has the BARRIERS Scale changed nursing practice? An integrative review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 63(4), 322-333