Facilitating data-driven evidence-based practice change: the Best Practice Project

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URL: https://tghncollections.pubpub.org/pub/ek24ijpy

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Background and Aims: The Best Practice Project aims to provide children’s nursing teams throughout Africa with the opportunity to improve the quality and safety of care for children and their families; achieve measurably excellent, evidence-based nursing practice; and consolidate a high-performing professional culture of excellence and compassion. Methods: Nurse-led teams at eight paediatric facilities in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe are applying custom-made practice development tools and models selected to align with African care environments. The lack of high-quality data is often a barrier to quality improvement in lower-resourced health systems. Nurse-sensitive metrics largely derive from higher-resourced settings and translate poorly to African contexts. This project utilises a novel suite of nurse-sensitive metrics designed for use in African paediatric settings. Data regarding key outcome indicators for service delivery and proxy measurement of nursing-sensitive clinical outcomes related to implementation of evidence-based practice guidelines are captured through monthly settings profiles. The project also addresses nurses’ lack of familiarity with capturing and using data to inform nursing processes and includes planned activities to strengthen capacity. Results: The two-year project is ongoing. We will present interim results, including the monthly settings profiles (team dashboards) which represent an innovative approach to nursing data visualisation. Conclusion: Early indications are that the Best Practice Project is well-received by nurse participants, and that it is contributing to the translation of contextually-relevant evidence into practice to improve paediatric nursing care. Nurses are rapidly developing the necessary skills to capture and use data to inform practice change.