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Organizing a conference based on evidence and that generates evidence

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Statement of the Problem: Designing a conference organized by nurses and developed to inform and engage nurses can be a challenge. In the past, conferences were organized by a committee who chose a theme and invite experts to discuss what they knew about the topic in keynote addresses. Leaders and academics were also invited to give presentations and posters on areas of their in-process or completed research. Conferences are always been places for people to network and reflect but in the past it was more difficult to collect, collate and synthesize information in real time that could guide practice. As a result of increase in the technology, the focus on evidence and other innovations has now becomes possible, to use evidences on both i.e., designing conferences and generate information from those conferences that can be used directly in nursing practice.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Two different conferences were held in Middle Eastern countries in the past 3 years that were intended to do the following: (1) Use evidence in the design of the conference, (2) generate evidence-based practice questions and to generate new evidence for nurses to use in practice. The author was involved in the design and organization of both conferences. She used a reflective and continuous improvement model to both note the strength of the designs of each conference and note their limitations. During each conference, themes were identified from responses of hundreds of nurses, to generate both a report with all of the respondents' answers and a PowerPoint summarizing the salient points.

Findings: The first conference resulted in generation of over 50 evidence-based practice questions from a group of more than 300 nurses from a large specialist hospital. The second conference generated five strategies from 350 nurses to be used by a nursing secretariat to be used to guide their regional plan on a key issue facing nurses.

Conclusion & Significance: Nurse Attendees responded favorably to the three major conferences. Remember, news leaders and organizers were very satisfied with having information that is immediate and feedback to the conference attendees during the time of the conference.

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