

How Evidence-Based Methodology May Be Incorporated Into My Daily Practice.

Evidence-based practice can be thought of more generally as developing an "evidence-based culture" or mindset because it is an organic synthesis and constant resynthesis of the practitioner's point of view (e.g. education and experience), the client's point of view (e.g. individual needs, specific goals, health history), and best research evidence as relevant to the demographic that you serve. Evidence-based "culture" can make positive improvements in the practices of many types of industries, especially in the fitness industry where professionals and consumers alike face the challenge to filter fad from program design based on solid exercise science and nutrition. While the idea of evidence-based guidelines seems to be a good thing, the stumbling block seems to be in the formulation of relevant guidelines, their implementation and application (Bazian Ltd., 2005). Even with the difficulties presented by Bazian Ltd. (2005) regarding "guidelines", adopting the mindset of an evidence-based "culture" can help the fitness professional distinguish XYZ fads/trends/products from truly valid new developments in the field of exercise thus not only saving time and money, but also improving client results.

I first evaluate such XYZ claims based on my knowledge and education. Then I seek out quality research, and other professional reviews of XYZ (taking into consideration who is claiming to be what type of professional). Furthermore, I check the guidelines set by established organizations such as the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Strength and Conditioning Association which are readily available to the layman. This is similar to the evidence-based healthcare and practice that Bazian Ltd. (2005) describes which factors in the clinician's experience and best clinical evidence. If XYZ seems to consistently produce results in-line with the claims, then I personally test it myself to make sure it is a valid option for a particular demographic that I serve before I try to implement and apply XYZ into my practice. I repeat this organic synthesis of information/critical evaluation (my evidence-based "culture") for not only new XYZ claims but also for established practices to keep everything current and to weed out old methods that have been debunked by new science.

With technology and information at my fingertips, I do face the same problems as Bazian Ltd. (2005) mentions such as information overload, the relevancy of lengthy and highly detailed guidelines, and distinguishing which guidelines or parts of guidelines will be most helpful and easiest to assimilate thus saving me time and money while producing great client outcomes. Bazian Ltd. (2005) also warns against improper implementation and application of any guideline as it may do more harm than good. The study by Bazian Ltd. notes that "guidelines can work but often don't" (Bazian Ltd., 2005, p. 274). Overall balance, relevancy, and judiciousness between the roles of clinician, patient, and best evidence along with balance "between intensity, sustainability and comprehensiveness in using guidelines" (Bazian Ltd., 2005, p. 274) seem to be key factors in a successful evidence-based "culture" approach to client care.

The fitness industry is bombarded with new claims every day from "method-X" to "product-Y" and "nutrition-Z" promising to make you stronger, faster, fitter, slimmer, more youthful, and closer to whatever Adonis you desire. By integrating the perspectives of the fitness professional, the client, and best evidence into an evidence-based "cultural" view and balancing between the theory, implementation, and application of evidence-based guidelines, both the fitness professional and fitness client can benefit by weeding out unsubstantiated fads and trends which are unfortunately too prevalent.

References

Bazian Ltd. (2005). Do evidence-based guidelines improve the quality of care? *Evidence-Based Healthcare and Public Health*, 9, 270-275.