Impact of Journal Clubs as an Educational Tool for Radiology Technologists

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Category I: Breast Center Operations, Administration and Programs
Subcategory: Programs

Objectives
Investigate the impact of a journal club (JC) intervention to provide education for Allied Health Providers (AHP).

Methods
This evidence based practice (EBP) project was intended to investigate the impact of a journal club intervention to provide education to radiologist technologist (RT) working in a breast center. Current standard of care is that each RT is independently responsible for continuing education (CE). The study is a descriptive pre/post test design, utilizing the Evidence Based Practice Questionnaire (EBPQ), 24-item survey, to measure staffs’ knowledge, attitudes and implementation of (EBP) at baseline and at six-month post intervention.

The intervention included providing a one hour EBP course focusing on research conduct, utilization, and critiquing of literature, followed by five monthly facilitated journal clubs to appraise research and application to practice. Analysis was performed using the statistical software, SPSS 16.0. Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables.

Results
Eleven RTs participated, three certified in ultrasound and eight in multimodality breast imaging. There was not a statistically significant change in the mean difference of participants’ knowledge between the pre and post survey, but there was a strong correlation between the number of JC’s attended and their reduction in gap of knowledge, specifically in the areas of formulating a question ($p=.036$), tracking down evidence ($p=.025$), critical appraisal ($p=0.10$) and sharing information ($p=.006$). This correlation was also evident with an increase in practice change; retrieval of evidence ($p=.035$), sharing ideas ($p=0.004$) and dissemination of new ideas ($p=.017$).

The most astounding changes occurred with staffs attitudes regarding EBP. Staff responses shifted from; resenting having their clinical practice questioned, to welcoming questions on their practice ($p=.021$), viewing EBP as a waste of time, to believing that EBP is fundamental to their professional practice ($p=.021$), continuing with trusted methods rather than changing to anything new, and changing their practice based on evidence ($p=.023$). Practice changes were evident in information technology skills including utilization of online search engines ($p=.045$) and converting information needs into a research question ($p=.043$).

Conclusions
A Journal club is a tool that can be utilized to provide education for AHP’s working in a breast center. Even with identified barriers to EBP including, time and funding, the staff elected to continue with the JC’s as they found personal and professional value in them. We continue to hold the JC’s and the results of this study were shared with administration. Due to staff satisfaction, increase in knowledge and practice changes, our breast center currently blocks 30 minutes each month for JC.