

Evaluating the Different Types of Research

Note: When you 'read' the papers in the following activities, we do not mean that you have to digest what the papers say! We suggest you read them quickly, with a view to getting a 'big picture' of their focus, style and so on. All the papers have been co-authored by Irish nurses in clinical practice, which you will find encouraging for your own writing plans.

Practice Notes

The next paper we want you to read is a paper published in 'Practice Notes' of the *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*. The paper describes a doctor-led, and nurse co-ordinated, innovation managed from the Oncology-Haematology Department of Galway University Hospitals. The first author is a clinical nurse specialist (and advanced nurse practitioner candidate) in Haematology. The nurse co-ordinating the initiative (the first author) was really excited about the initiative and could see the benefits for patients, but never considered writing about it for publication until it was suggested to her. That is the case with many nurses who are leading innovative projects in their workplace, but may underplay the significance of their work.

The (short) paper is:

Meenaghan, T., O'Dwyer, M., Hayden, P., Hayat, A., Murray, M. and Dowling, M. (2010) 'Home administration of bortezomib: making a difference to myeloma patients' lives', *European Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 14, 134-136.

As you are reading the paper:

- Make a note of the paper's focus and structure.
- Write your views on the paper.

Did you notice that there were more than five references in this paper? This is because additional references were added following blind review of the paper. This was acceptable to the editor because the references were added following the reviewing process.

Are you getting any ideas from your own practice based on the paper you have just read? Certainly, writing in a group with others (as in the previous paper) makes the process more manageable. The important thing is that you set the process in motion and write a draft, and then the other members of the team add to the initial work. But it does require one person (not necessarily the lead author) to oversee and organise the preparation of the paper.

Literature Review

The next paper we want you to read is a published literature review on discharge planning. The first author is a staff nurse who undertook a literature review of discharge planning as part requirement of a Bachelor of Nursing Studies and subsequently was successful in getting her review published.

This paper was published in the *British Journal of Nursing*, a peer-reviewed journal with a strong clinical focus. This journal requires the author(s) to include a number of key points, and suggest the author(s) use many sub-headings to help signpost the topic for readers.

The paper is:

Carroll, A. and Dowling, M. (2007) 'Discharge planning: communication, education and patient participation', *British Journal of Nursing*, 16(14), 882-886.

As you are reading the paper:

- Make a note of how the paper is structured and presented.
- Take note of the detailed account provided on how the literature search was undertaken (this is a requirement for any paper focused on a review of the literature).
- State your views on the style adopted.
- State your views on the intended target audience for this paper.

Research papers

Read this paper:

Hannon, C. and Murphy, K. (2007) 'A survey of nurses' and midwives' knowledge of risks and lifestyle factors associated with osteoporosis', *Journal of Orthopaedic Nursing*, 11(1), 30-37.

As you are reading the paper:

- Take note of the format.
- Take note of the amount of detail given to each aspect of the study.
- State your views on this paper.

The next paper is another survey, published in the *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* (Blackwell Science). The format in this study is very similar to the previous one you just read. However, you will notice that the final conclusion section also addresses implications for practice.

Most journals now want authors to make explicit what implications for practice their research will have.

Disease management updates

You may find it helpful to read the following paper on myeloma:

Kelly, M., Meenaghan, T. and Dowling, M. (2010) 'Myeloma: making sense of a complex blood cancer', *British Journal of Nursing*, 19(21), 1346-1353.

The paper focuses on the following:

- An introduction describing what myeloma is.
- The physiological events surrounding myeloma.
- How myeloma is diagnosed.
- The effects of myeloma on the body (bone destruction, hypercalcaemia, renal insufficiency, anaemia).
- Treatment options for myeloma and nursing management (chemotherapy induction, novel immunomodulatory drugs, Proteasome inhibitor [bortezomib], steroid therapy, biphosphonate therapy, autologous stem cell transplantation).
- Living with a diagnosis of myeloma.
- Conclusion.

As you can see, such a paper requires you to address all aspects of the illness/disease, so writing it with others helps, because you can each focus on a different section. Moreover, if you are in a role as

a CNS/CMS or ANP/AMP, you already know a great deal about many speciality topics, so this type of publication may be one you will choose.

The journals that accept papers providing a discussion on illness/treatments and so on are those with a wide audience. The RCN publishing company publishes a number of journals such as these, and are a good choice if you decide to write a paper such as the one above on myeloma.