

Inspiring Passion for the *Use of Research-Based Evidence*

By Dr. Johanne Gagnon

<http://www.fsi.ulaval.ca/btec/>
Johanne.Gagnon@fsi.ulaval.ca

I have three professional passions – **training** health professionals in the retrieval and interpretation of research-based evidence, **brokering** knowledge between health researchers and practitioners, and **supporting** health professionals in the use of evidence in decision-making and practice. These passions are embodied in a new and revolutionary environment, the *bureau de transfert et d'échange de connaissances (BTEC)* – the bureau for the transfer and exchange of knowledge – an innovative interface between research and practice that responds to the ubiquitous demand for evidence-based decision-making and practice. BTEC currently serves French language nurses and nursing managers working at the seven teaching hospitals and public health teaching centers in Quebec City.

At the level of the individual health professional, BTEC is mandated to teach them how to use research-based evidence. At the level of the health services organization, the objective is that teams of BTEC-trained health professionals will nurture a research-attuned culture.

For individual health professionals, the most powerful and empowering aspect of BTEC's approach is that each health professional brings their *own* questions to BTEC. At BTEC, they receive customized, personalized training and support for the retrieval, interpretation and application of relevant research-based evidence. Working with 'real' and directly applicable questions and being supported by a team of highly experienced, BTEC trainers strengthens their commitment to the learning process, enhances their motivation to use results, and reinforces their ownership of the outcomes. Alternatively, if they determine that research-based evidence is not available to answer their question, BTEC works with them to identify, engage and inform researchers in the field and collaboratively translate their question into a researchable project.

Health professionals typically come to BTEC, frustrated by their inability to find answers to important work-related questions and, in as little as six to eight months, they leave BTEC excited, passionate and self-sufficient – with the skills, resources and confidence to independently locate and apply research-based evidence.

It is interesting to note that researchers also appreciate the existence of BTEC. It expands the audience for their research findings and exposes them to emerging and important practice-related knowledge gaps that require new research to be conducted.

For health services organizations, achieving a research-attuned culture does not occur naturally. It requires time, expertise, dedicated learning resources and support structures. A small team of 10-20 BTEC 'graduates' can take on this role (leadership) and break through traditional organizational barriers and stimulate the evolution to a research-attuned culture.

BTEC training and support activities are complemented by a rich selection of models, courses, tools and resources. These include conceptual, process and operational models; a continuum of six graduate and post graduate courses on knowledge transfer and exchange (four are delivered at BTEC and two are accessible on-line from the workplace); practical and theoretical workshops; a web site for sharing evidence-based solutions; practice guidelines; a virtual simulation of literature reviews related to clinical cases; scientific writing guidelines; a scientific reading grid; and, plans for a journal club and a web exchange forum.

In only 2 years, BTEC's strong reputation, high success rate and increasing popularity have spawned demands that it rapidly expands its program to serve the entire province of Quebec. In spite of the increasing demand, BTEC relies on an incremental strategy for its growth. It must learn from experience, reflect on outcomes, and adjust its offerings accordingly.

Being the only program of its kind, BTEC has attracted the attention of other French-speaking jurisdictions.