


An Upstream Approach to Acquiring, Applying, and Sharing Evidence-Based Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation

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The **RRTC-EBP VR** is a national research collaborative partnered by the following key institutions and organizations:

 The University of Wisconsin – Madison Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education	 The University of Texas – El Paso
 The University of Wisconsin – Stout Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI)	 Southern University at Baton Rouge
	 Michigan State University

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What does the RRTC-EBP VR do?

- Conduct research on evidence-based practice
- Provide VR practitioners with knowledge and tools for implementing evidence-based vocational rehabilitation practices
- Goal: improve employment rates and quality of employment for people with disabilities

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What is Evidence-Based Practice?

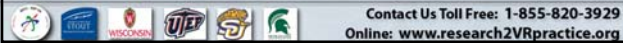
- **Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)** is "...a clinical decision-making process beginning with formulating clinical questions to ask, determining the best practice, and critically appraising the evidence for validity and applicability to the particular situation." (*Chan et al. 2010*).
- **EBP** "advocates that every rehabilitation and health professional should have an interest in delivering the best possible services to their consumers". (*Chan et al, 2009*)

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What does EBP Involve?

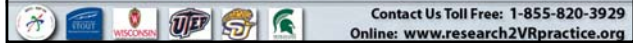
“ **What** treatment, by **whom** is most effective for **this** individual with **that** specific problem, and under **which** set of circumstances”

(Paul, 1967, P.111)



What does EBP Involve? - cont.

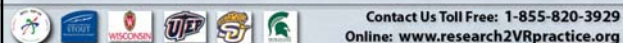
- Asking critical questions
- Identifying reliable sources of information
- Evaluating the significance of the evidence
- Using professional expertise and judgment



5 Levels of EBP

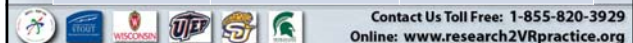


- Level 1** Systematic review of multiple, well designed, randomized controlled trials
- Level 2** Properly designed, randomized controlled trials of appropriate size
- Level 3** Well-designed trials, single-group pre-post, cohort, time series, or matched case-controlled studies
- Level 4** Well-designed non-experimental studies
- Level 5** Opinions of respected authorities based on clinical evidence, descriptive studies, or reports of expert committees.



Continuum of Innovative Practices

Emerging	Promising	Evidence-based
Offers knowledge about what works and does not work, but doesn't have evaluation data to demonstrate its effectiveness (Puddy & Wilkens, 2011; Twyman & Sota, 2008)	Includes emerging practice elements and adds programmatic quantitative data that demonstrates positive outcomes, but doesn't contain research data to support its replication (DePalma, 2002)	A practice with statistical and clinical significance and encompasses emerging, to promising, to evidence-based (Driever, 2002)




2015 VR Counselor Survey on KT

Purpose
 ...to identify incentives, barriers, and specific training needs of VR practitioners related to participation in a knowledge translation process, and to learn if acquiring new knowledge about evidence-based practices (EBP) results in applying and sharing such knowledge.

Goal: learn how to best facilitate implementation of EBP and services within the state-federal VR program.

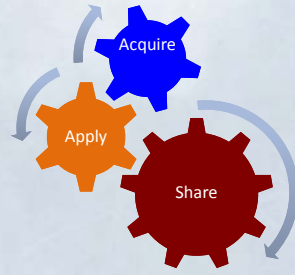
Participants

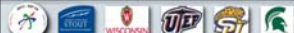
- 281 respondents nationally
- 81% Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors; 19% Administrators, Directors, Managers, Specialists (19%)
- 72% have been employed with the state-federal VR program for at least 5 years



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2015 VR Counselor Survey on KT: Preliminary Results





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2015 VR Counselor Survey on KT: Preliminary Results

Acquire
 90% of participants expressed interest in “acquiring new knowledge that promotes EBP in vocational rehabilitation”

Apply
 96% of participants reported interest in “applying new knowledge that may affect employment outcomes for people with disabilities”

Share
 85% of participants expressed interest in “sharing new knowledge that may affect employment outcomes for people with disabilities”

Only 45% reported having already shared the newly acquired knowledge; primarily shared with colleagues.




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2015 VR Counselor Survey on KT: Preliminary Results

Participants reported believing that they would benefit from receiving further information in specific knowledge areas related to EBP:

- Disability-related strategies related to successful employment outcomes (Mental illness, transition, autism spectrum disorders, brain injury and intellectual/developmental disabilities, learning disabilities)
- Labor market information/employer needs
- Skill development (counseling practices, motivational interviewing, job placement/job development/supported employment, assessment)
- Other (culture of poverty, cultural competence)



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Need for Upstream Approach

“Upstream”=earlier in the process

The concept of utilizing an “upstream approach” is new within the field of Knowledge Translation

Upstream approaches are used in other fields

(Freundenberg, Franzosa, Chilsholm, & Libman, 2015; Moskowitz & Bodenheimer, 2011)



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Statement of the Problem

- Previous research indicates that although VR counselors are interested and believe in the efficacy of EBP, a gap exists between research and practice (Lui, Anderson, Matthews, Nierenhausen, & Schlegelmilch, 2014; Tansey, Bezyak, Chan, Leahy, & Lui, 2014).
- This study was designed to learn
 - whether a gap between research and practice **also** exists at the **educational level** and,
 - identify knowledge-to-action processes to more adequately prepare students entering the VR system to critically evaluate research and its relevance to their unique caseloads.

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Our Study

“Graduate Rehabilitation Students’ Perceptions of Evidence-Based Practice”

- To provide the best services to rehabilitation consumers, it is essential that practitioners have knowledge of and ability to implement EBPs.
- Measures master’s level rehabilitation students’ perceptions of their understanding and ability to implement EBP.

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Methodology

Pilot Survey

- Sample of convenience
- Students enrolled in both the campus and online MS Vocational Rehabilitation (MSVR) programs at the University of Wisconsin-Stout
 - 62 MSVR students (21 on-campus, 41 online)
 - Response: 20 students (32%)

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Methodology: National Survey

Invitation to participate

- Email sent to program directors of 113 Master’s level rehabilitation programs across U.S.
- Email contained an explanation of the research, and invited directors to forward to their students.
- Email included a link to a Qualtrics survey

Survey

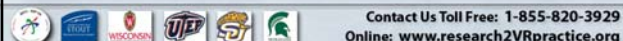
- 38 EBP questions
- 18 Demographic questions



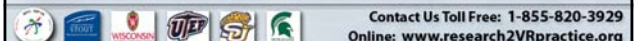
Characteristic	N	%
Age		
22-29	19	36.5
30-39	15	28.8
40-49	7	13.5
50-59	6	11.5
60-64	3	5.6
No Response	2	3.8
Sex		
Male	18	34.6
Female	33	63.5
Transgender	0	0
Prefer not to answer	1	1.9



Race/Ethnicity	N	%
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	8
Asian Indian	1	2
Asian (including Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	2	4
Black or African American	8	15
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	6	12
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	2
White	39	75
Other	2	4
Prefer not to answer	2	4



Credits Completed	N	%
0-12	5	9.6
13-24	11	21.2
25-36	15	28.8
37-48	11	21.2
49-60	2	3.8
61-72	4	7.7
>72	1	2
No Response	3	5.8



Work Experience (VR or Related Field)	N	%
0	24	46
1-5	18	35
5-10	7	14
26	1	2
36	1	2
No Response	1	2
Professional Roles		
Not currently working	14	27
Rehab Counselor: State/Federal VR	4	8
Rehab Counselor: VA	1	2
Educator	3	6
Private Rehabilitation Practitioner	1	2
Case Manager	3	6
Employment Service Provider	3	6
Transition Specialist	1	2
Other	21	41
No Response	1	2

Other:
Student, CNA, Intern, Independent Living, Substance Abuse Counselor, Personal Care Assistant, Military Specialist.

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Disability Status	N	%
Yes	24	46
No	27	52
Prefer not to answer	1	2
Disability Status in Immediate Family or Household		
Yes	23	44
No	29	56

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38 EBP Survey Questions

For each item listed below, please rate *how important you believe it is* and *how prepared you are to perform it* (1 being the least, 4 being the most).

1. Understand evidence-based practice (EBP).
2. Differentiate between an EBP and non-EBP.
3. Share EBP within the profession.
4. Acquire research, scholarly, and professional materials for EBP.
5. Understand relevant research, scholarly, or professional materials.
6. Analyze relevant research, scholarly, or professional materials.

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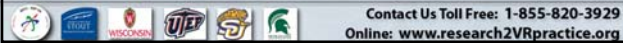
Survey Questions - cont.

7. Evaluate the relevance of research, scholarly, or professional materials.
8. Critically evaluate the quality of research, scholarly, and professional materials.
9. Stay current on research, scholarly, and professional materials.
10. Apply EBP.
11. Implement EBP in my future practice.
12. Impact consumer outcomes by applying EBP.

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Survey Questions - cont.

- 13. Determine the appropriate population for an EBP.
- 14. Select the best EBP to prepare a rehabilitation plan.
- 15. Develop a rehabilitation plan that is supported by EBP.
- 16. Monitor the effect of an EBP on the consumer.
- 17. Modify a rehabilitation plan based on EBP.
- 18. Evaluate case outcomes.
- 19. Incorporate knowledge gained from previous case outcomes into future cases.



Results

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean scores for all 19 items range from 3.52-3.86

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Scores for all 19 items range from 2.74-3.17



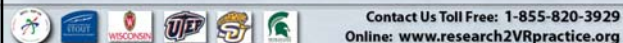
Implement EBP in My Future Practice

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.73
- Std Dev: 0.63

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.88
- Std Dev: 0.94



Select the best EBP to prepare a rehabilitation plan

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.71
- Std Dev: 0.61

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.74
- Std Dev: 1.01



Develop a Rehabilitation Plan that is Supported by EBP

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.63
- Std Dev: 0.71

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.75
- Std Dev: 0.99

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Apply EBP

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.67
- Std Dev: 0.58

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.83
- Std Dev: 1.00

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Monitor the Effect of an EBP on the Consumer

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.75
- Std Dev: 0.65

How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.90
- Std Dev: 1.05

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Modify a Rehabilitation Plan Based on EBP

How important do you believe it is?

- Mean score: 3.60
- Std Dev: 0.75

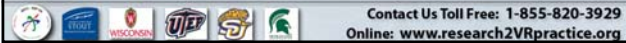
How prepared are you to perform it?

- Mean Score: 2.79
- Std Dev: 1.05

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EBP VR Goal...

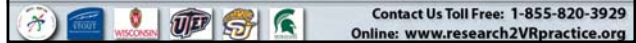
- To ensure that new knowledge gained through the course of research **(KNOWLEDGE)** *ultimately improves the lives of people with disabilities, and furthers their participation in society* (NIDRR, 2005).



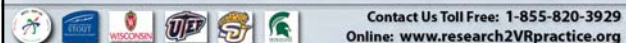
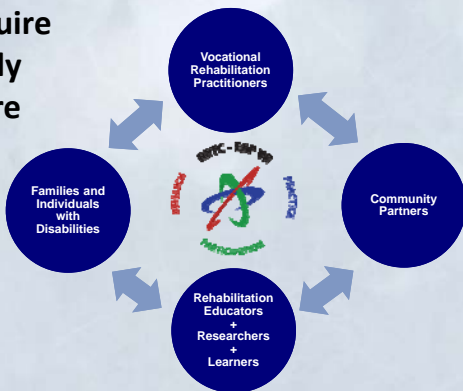
Next Steps

- Focus on upstream movement
- Manuscripts
- Rehabilitation education <> Future rehabilitation practitioners and leaders
- Ultimate goal >>>>

Knowledge ↔ Knowledge User



- Acquire
- Apply
- Share



EBP Resources



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If you want to improve employment and quality of work outcomes for people with disabilities,
make OUR research, YOUR best practice!

