

The Use of Research For Evidence Informed Practice

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ABSTRACT

Providing effective treatment is an ethical imperative for behavioral health practitioners and the Evidence Informed Practice (EIP) process is a vehicle for this purpose. The EIP decision-making process incorporates the best available research evidence with practitioner wisdom and client values, preferences, and needs. Steps in the EIP process include: (1) formulating an answerable EIP question; (2) Locating research evidence to answer the EIP question; (3) Critically evaluating the evidence based on it's quality and rigor; (4) Identifying treatment options that have the strongest research support; (5) Deciding with our clients which treatment best fits their values, preferences, and needs and engaging in it; and (5) Monitoring clients progress on their self-identified goals. A group of social work (BASW Program) students applied this process to a case scenario involving a 24-year-old adult male combat veteran who was suffering from Posttraumatic Stress and Alcohol Use Disorders. The BASW Program student presenters applied the EIP process and identified Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PET) as the treatment with the strongest research support for this client. In this poster presentation these students will illustrate how they applied each step of the EIP process to arrive at their decisions, and to plan for monitoring this clients progress. This presentation demonstrates a research-based method for students across behavioral health disciplines at EWU to use in making sound practice decisions throughout their careers.

INTRODUCTION

PICO Process

- P: Patient (Client), Population, and/or Problem - This is where you identify who or what you are treating. Be sure to identify specific details important to the case like age and gender
- I: Intervention - This is where you identify the chosen intervention to treat the aforementioned patient, problem, or population
- C: Comparison - This is where you choose a second intervention to compare to your initial intervention choice. Which is more effective?
- O: Outcome - This is what you hope to see as a result of the intervention

Answerable Question

- In Male Young Adult Veterans, how effective are seeking safety and prolonged exposure therapy for reducing PTSD symptoms and alcohol use?

Case Description

- Young, single, male adult veteran
- Served two years in afghanistan
- Client describes the following personal characteristics
 - Keeps to himself
 - States family and friends are close
 - Play video games, drinks and smokes marijuana with his friends
- The Patient, Ryan, presents with severe symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress and Alcohol Use Disorder

METHODS/SEARCH CRITERIA

Patient	Intervention	Criteria Included for Articles
Military	Randomized Control Trial/Test	Empirical
Veterans	Intervention	Quantitative
Soldiers	Prolonged Exposure Therapy	Full Peer Reviewed
Young Male Veterans	Seeking Safety	Peer Reviewed Journal
Combat Veterans	Cognitive Behavior Therapy	Linked Full Text
Service men	EMDR	References Available
		Language English
		Age Group of 18 years & older
		Human Intended Audience
Comparisons	Outcome	EIP Steps
Versus	Reducing Symptoms	1. Question Formulation
Substance abuse/use	Interventions	2. Search for Best Evidence
Alcohol abuse/use		3. Critically Appraise Evidence
Alcohol use disorder		4. Select an Intervention
PTSD		5. Monitor Client Progress

RESULTS

Overview

Based on all the articles and evidence that we thoroughly researched we found that Prolonged Exposure Therapy was the most effective intervention for our client that is experiencing PTSD and substance abuse issues.

Strengths and Limitations

- **Strengths**
 - Tested reliability and validity
 - CAPS is what is most commonly used when dealing with PTSD
 - Very common within our research
- **Limitations**
 - Very lengthy
 - Can only do it on a weekly basis at most
 - Some of the CAPS questions might not fully relate to our clients specific problems

Supporting Evidence

When compared to Relaxation therapy, participants who received Prolonged exposure therapy(PET) had a greater decrease in PTSD symptoms

Quality of Evidence/General Findings

The evidence that met our criteria all pointed to Prolonged Exposure Therapy as the most promising practice for this case. Out of the three articles that we studied, we rated all of them 4 out of 5. This rating was due to some articles indicating improvement but drop out rate for the insignificant quality control group seemed high. All studies were Randomized Control Trials, with no Strong or Weak Quasi Experiments.

Evaluation Methods

- We believe standardized scales would be the most effective evaluation method for this case.
- Most of our research used a CAPS scale
- Standardized scales make the most sense for this case because it is measuring behavior, moods, and cognitions.
- The CAPS scale will help us measure and see the progress our client is making with their PTSD symptoms (Monthly)
- On a daily basis we would have our client self measure their alcohol intake and signs and symptoms of PTSD

CLIENT APPLICATION

Training

- Training in basic principles, procedures and policies regarding the implementation of the intervention.
 - Therapists treatment guide. (Foa et al., 2007)
- Further training in the intervention and implementation process.
 - PTSD workshop. (Bodie et al., 2023)
- Consultation and supervision from experienced colleagues.
 - Clinical expert. (Bonnie Zucker, n.d.)

Case Considerations

- Comorbid diagnosis of PTSD and AUD
 - Monitor the client for unintended harmful effects from interventions.
- Male combat veteran who prefers a solitary life.
 - Find treatment groups that are primarily veterans and encourage positive social interaction.
- Client would like relief of PTSD symptoms and alcohol dependence.
 - Initiate two treatment programs that involve group and individual therapy that address both symptoms separately.
- Client admits to Cannabis use.
 - Counsel the client in the value of sustained sobriety to assure effective treatment.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion this presentation demonstrates a research-based method for students across behavioral health disciplines at EWU to use in making sound practice decisions throughout their careers. One of the first ways someone can learn more about Prolonged Exposure Therapy is by finding and appraising Systematic reviews or Meta-Analyses to conduct further research on the effectiveness of the intervention. Analyzing reviews of treatment practices can be found in the Cochrane and Campbell Collaboration databases and would be an intelligent first step. A second step would be learning the proper implementation of this intervention. That can be done by reading a treatment manual that provides basic principle definitions in conjunction with clear protocols and procedures for the utilization of Prolonged Exposure Therapy. Another valuable resource for learning more about implementing this therapy would be to consult colleagues who have successfully used this intervention prior. Finally, acquiring further training in using this intervention to treat clients by attending a continuing education workshop or professional conference. The APA's Society of Clinical Psychology web page also has several links to different training resources.

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