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Two new teaching elements to improve the understanding of Evidence- Based Practice (EBP) among healthcare students in Norway

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Background

- Traditional evidence-based practice (EBP) teaching includes the definition of EBP and the first three steps of EBP
- It's important to question this practice and its impact on behavioral changes among healthcare students
- Norwegian regulations require health and social care graduates to make evidence-informed professional judgements

Albarqouni L et al, 2018. PMID: 30646073; Bala et al 2021. PMID: 34292986; Saunders et al 2019 PMID: 31074582; Colunga-Lozano et al 2026 PMID: 42347909, PMID: 31319892; Komuhangi et al 2025 PMID: 41257824; Ministry of Education and Research. (2025). Regulations

Aims

- To describe two new EBP teaching elements designed to assist bachelor's and master's students in healthcare understand and apply EBP
- To report students' experiences of the two EBP courses and their new teaching elements

Methods

- Description of the two new EBP courses based on information extracted from their learning resources and exam descriptions
- We conducted focus group interviews with 25 first-semester bachelor's and 24 master's students to explore their experiences of the EBP courses and its new teaching elements

Results: Two new EBP-courses

	Bachelor's course (5 ECTs)	Master's course (10 ECTs)
Focus on all the steps of EBP	+	+
The new teaching element	Using health claims as a stepping stone to EBP (informed health choices)*	Integrating improvement science (QI) and implementation science (EBP, KT)**
Digital learning path available in Canvas	+	+
Group exam (integrating the new element and EBP)	+	+
Constructive alignment implemented	+	+
Blended learning (weeks)	+ (3)	+ (5)
Inspired by CASP teaching model	+	+

* https://www.informedhealthchoices.org/; **Nilsen et al 2022 PMID: 36926490; Orjasaeter Elvsaas et al 2025 PMID: 39610403, Solvang et al 2025 PMID: 41088188

Results from bachelor's studen

Critical appraisal of health claims and EBP are connected. EBP is sort of next step



I found the course useful for developing my critical thinking skills

I think it would have been much duller if you had removed [the health claims]. That's how [the course] becomes relevant for us

Critical appraisal skills are fundamental skills that need to be taught in the beginning of our bachelor education, developed during our education and we need to practice as future healthcare practitioners

Results from master's students

Improvement competence is important to all health workers

I felt that the implementation was the most important thing. Being updated on research is emphasised in many contexts, but here, we had the opportunity to work with a process where the actual implementation is to be carried out. It was beneficial and a strength in the course

I think many have heard about and become tired of evidence-based practice because we've been getting it in with a teaspoon since day one, but this course is excellent because it focuses on the implementation. It dawns on us how to use evidence-based practice in clinical work

Limits

The transferability of the findings on students' experiences of the two EBP teaching elements is limited because the study was based on focus group interviews.

Conclusions

- Tailoring EBP teaching to specific student groups – for example, by incorporating health claims into teaching for bachelor's students and combining EBP and quality improvement in teaching for master's students – may improve students' understanding and application of EBP
- The last finding will be explored further in an on-going longitudinal study