

## WHY EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE MATTERS



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Rachel is a nutritional health coach and behaviour change mentor currently working on the NHS type 2 diabetes prevention and remission programmes. Her previous career as a chef ignited her interest in nutrition due to her love for food and cooking. Rachel is passionate about the significant impact small changes can have on health.

[www.thelifestyledietchef.com](http://www.thelifestyledietchef.com)



### REFERENCES

Please visit:  
[www.NHDMag.co.uk/article-references.html](http://www.NHDMag.co.uk/article-references.html)

**In the ever-evolving landscape of healthcare, evidence-based practice (EBP) stands as a cornerstone of high-quality patient care. In the field of dietetics and nutrition, where dietary choices have a profound impact on an individual's health, the importance of EBP cannot be overstated.**

Evidence-based practice in healthcare involves integrating the best available research evidence with clinical expertise and the individual patient's preferences and values.<sup>1</sup> This approach ensures that decisions about patient care are based on sound scientific evidence, rather than tradition, intuition or anecdotal experience.<sup>1</sup>

### IMPROVES PATIENT OUTCOMES

The primary aim of any healthcare professional, including dietitians and nutritionists, is to enhance patient well-being. EBP plays a pivotal role in achieving this goal. By relying on scientifically validated information and treatment approaches, dietitians and nutritionists can provide patients with personalised recommendations that are most likely to yield positive results.<sup>2</sup> This translates into improved health outcomes, better disease management and a higher quality of life for patients.

### ENSURES SAFETY

EBP also ensures patient safety. In the absence of evidence-based guidelines, there is a risk of adopting potentially harmful or ineffective dietary practices.<sup>2</sup> Nutrition professionals must avoid trendy diets or fads that lack scientific support and could jeopardise a patient's



health. EBP helps professionals make informed decisions that prioritise the well-being of their patients.

### ENHANCES PROFESSIONAL CREDIBILITY

Utilising evidence-based approaches elevates the credibility and reputation of dietitians and nutritionists.<sup>2</sup> When patients and colleagues see that practitioners are dedicated to staying current with the latest research and guidelines, trust and respect for the profession increase. This, in turn, fosters collaboration amongst healthcare professionals and promotes a holistic approach to patient care.<sup>2</sup>

### CONSEQUENCES OF NEGLECTING EBP

#### Ineffective treatments

Without EBP, nutrition professionals might recommend treatments or dietary plans that are ineffective, leading to wasted time and resources for both patients and healthcare systems.<sup>3</sup>

#### Potential harm

Non-evidence-based interventions can harm patients by causing adverse reactions, exacerbating existing health issues, or could even lead to new ones.<sup>3</sup>

#### Missed opportunities

Neglecting EBP means missing out on valuable insights and innovations that can improve patient care and outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

**SUPPORTING OTHER PROFESSIONALS**

EBP does not exist in isolation. It plays a vital role in supporting other healthcare professionals, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and creating a comprehensive approach to patient care.<sup>3</sup> Dietitians work alongside physicians, nurses, physical therapists and other healthcare professionals. By adhering to EBP principles, they can effectively communicate and collaborate with colleagues, ensuring that patient care is cohesive and consistent across disciplines.<sup>4</sup>

It provides a common ground for healthcare professionals to make informed decisions. Physicians can trust that the nutritional guidance provided by dietitians is based on the latest research, allowing them to integrate dietary considerations into their treatment plans.<sup>4</sup> The use of EBP in dietetics and nutrition contributes to the generation of new research and knowledge. This, in turn, benefits the entire healthcare sector by advancing our understanding of nutrition's impact on health and disease.

**CONCLUSION**

Evidence-based practice is the bedrock of quality healthcare in the modern era. Dietitians as key players in the health sector must prioritise EBP to ensure the best possible outcomes for their patients. By doing so, they not only enhance patient care but also support the broader healthcare community in delivering holistic and effective treatments.

Ultimately, EBP in dietetics and nutrition is not just a professional obligation; it is a commitment to improving lives and advancing the field of healthcare.

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY****Awareness campaigns****VEG PLEDGE MONTH**

[www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/do-your-own-fundraising/veg-pledge](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/do-your-own-fundraising/veg-pledge)

**MOVEMBER**

**Men's health awareness month**

<https://uk.movember.com>

**WORLD DIABETES DAY**

**14th November**

[www.diabetes.org.uk/get\\_involved/world-diabetes-day](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/get_involved/world-diabetes-day)

**WORLD AIDS DAY**

**1st December**

[www.unaids.org/en/2023-world-aids-day](http://www.unaids.org/en/2023-world-aids-day)

**Events & courses****FOOD MATTERS LIVE**

**14th-15th Nov - London / 5th-6th Dec - Manchester**

[www.foodmatterslive.com](http://www.foodmatterslive.com)

**FENS 2023 - 14TH EUROPEAN NUTRITION CONFERENCE**

**14th-17th November - Belgrade, Serbia**

<https://fens2023.org>

**DIABETES PROFESSIONAL CARE**

**15th-16th November**

[www.diabetesprofessionalcare.com](http://www.diabetesprofessionalcare.com)

**BAPEN ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**28th-29th November**

[www.bapen.org.uk/resources-and-education/meetings/annual-conference](http://www.bapen.org.uk/resources-and-education/meetings/annual-conference)

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