

Research-teaching linkages: Bringing evidence-based practice to life for students

Introduction

A key Scottish Quality Enhancement Theme identifies research-teaching linkages as essential to promoting the graduate attributes of students (The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) 2009). With this in mind, the Child Health team endeavoured to embed Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) and research into their programme, in a manner that would be meaningful and engaging for students; previously there had been minimal focus on these subjects until third year.

Aims

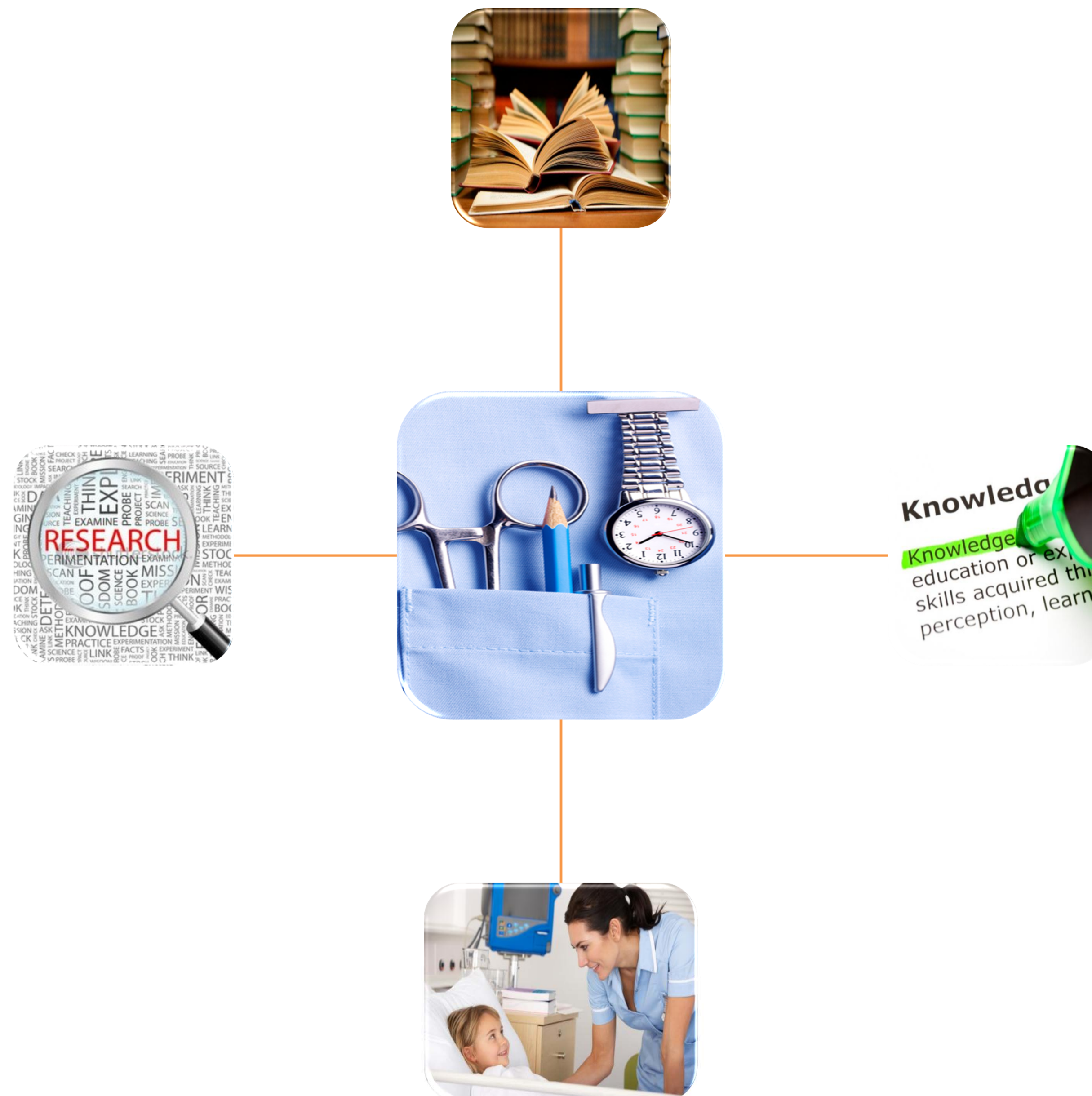
To engage students in the application of EBP & research to the management and nursing care of common childhood illnesses and injuries.

Learning & teaching

In Year 2, trimester 1, EBP and Illness and Injury modules are designed to run concurrently, combining EBP & research with the pathophysiology and care of a range of childhood illness and injuries. The content is delivered through a blended approach to learning including face to face lectures and clinical scenarios within the simulated environment.

References:

Cottrell, S., (2011) *Critical thinking skills; developing effective analysis and argument*. London, Palgrave.
Rolfe, G., (2007) Closing the theory –practice gap: a model of nursing praxis. JCN 2 (3) 173-177.
Scottish Government (2010) *The Healthcare Quality Strategy*. Edinburgh.
Nursing Midwifery Council (NMC) (2010) Standards for Pre-registration Nurse Education.



Assessment

Formative assessment – students compile an extended care plan of the nursing management of a common childhood injury or illness. Relevant, up-to-date evidence must be sourced and integrated into the care plan.

Summative – students sit an invigilated written exam and MCQ, and critique a research paper relating to childhood illness and injury, for example a qualitative or quantitative paper on bronchiolitis or blood transfusion.

Evaluation

Students do find the module challenging alongside practice *“often challenging; however, when related to the practice areas soon recognise the importance for our own professional development”* and *“this module prepared us for clinical practice in our first hospital placement ” (CH students).*

The way forward

Embedding these modules into the programme ensures students are fit for purpose (NMC 2008). Students can apply the theory to their practice, closing the theory to practice gap (Rolfe 2007) and application of high quality patient care (Scottish Government 2010). Develops the students critical reading, writing and thinking skills (Cottrell 2011).

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