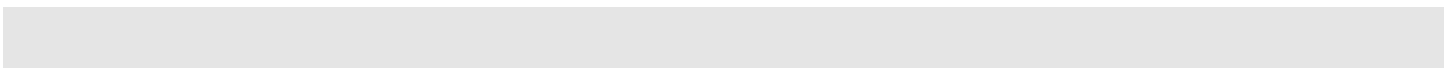
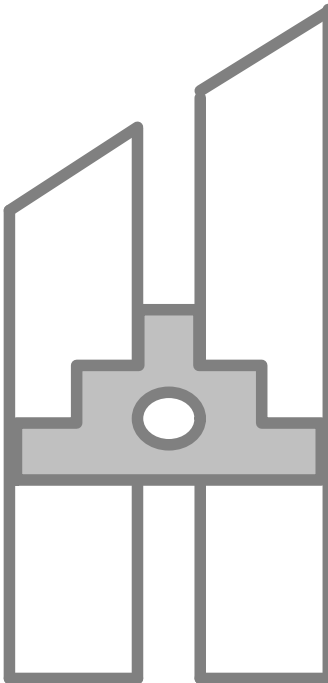


Bergen University College

Strategy for the Centre for Evidence Based Practice



Background

The term *evidence based practice* has had much attention in professional fields and in debates about research politics, especially in the health and social work sector. *Evidence Based practice* is also frequently mentioned in national forums, and this is also reflected in an increase in media coverage. Through strategic commitment to *evidence based practice*, Bergen University College has enhanced its national profile.

At a national level, *evidence based practice* is an important area of commitment in several public documents, including the two latest Reports to the Storting on Research (St. meld. Nr. 20 2004-05, St. meld. Nr. 39, 1998-99). In the latest research report, there is also a focus on *evidence based commerce* (St. meld. Nr. 20 2004-05).

The National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health- and Social Services states:

“Every student of health- and social work programmes should learn to practice their services as a member of a multidisciplinary team, focusing on evidence based practice, quality improvement and information technology.”

St. prp. nr. 1 (2005-06) states that “the development of *evidence based practice* and the evaluation of new methods is an important element in the plans and strategies of the regional health trusts”. Further, “...the necessity of an increased focus on relating and using research results to support the improvement of quality and development of a service built on *evidence based practice*” and points out that “...research is an important basis for *evidence based practice* and to secure high quality in diagnosis and patient treatment”.

Clearly the term *evidence based practice* is known and used in Norway. International centres for *evidence based practice* have existed for many years, for example at the universities in Maastricht in the Netherlands, in Oxford and York in Great Britain and in Adelaide, Australia. For the past three years, Bergen University College has established contacts with these centres.

There are several definitions of *evidence based practice*. The most well-known and accepted is the definition used by Sacket et al. in 1996:

“Evidence Based Practice is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients” (p. 71).

The essence of evidence based practice is combining clinical experience and expertise with the best available knowledge from research together with patient values.

Strategic commitment at Bergen University College and Centre for Evidence Based Practice

After a decision by the Faculty Board in May, 2003, *evidence based practice* has been one of four strategic programmes at the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences. Since June, 2003, it has also been an area of commitment in the Strategic Plan of Bergen University College. The latest commitment is the new Centre for Evidence Based Practice (New Strategic Plan for the College, Case 53/2005).

The Faculty of Health and Social Sciences will continue to maintain the core areas of health care and welfare and has the following areas of commitment:

- Social work and social marginalization
- Scholarship in Professional Health Practice

Vision

The vision of Bergen University College and the Centre is – *to signpost knowledge, culture and profession.*

Centre for Evidence Based Practice intends to focus on the challenges of information overload and the practice-research gap that the health and social sciences are facing. Also a focus is on how evidence based practice can be promoted while concurrently considering culture and professional performance of the disciplines based in the College.

Objective and target groups

The goal of the Centre for Evidence Based Practice is to promote the use of the best available knowledge in practice by educating reflected and knowledge-hungry students. A further goal is to engage professionals through research and development and by accepting assignments from governmental or private contractors. The activity at the Centre will maintain a high international standard.

Central target groups will be:

- employees in the university and college sector
- masters degree and research students
- professionals in the practice field
- governmental and private contractors

The new Centre will primarily direct its performance towards the health and social sciences. Simultaneously, cooperation will be sought with the two other faculties of Bergen University College; Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Education, particularly with their respective Centre for Innovation and Centre for Art, Culture and Communication. The purpose is to strengthen the curricular work and give and receive inspiration. The Centre will also seek

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cooperation with other units and programmes that are directly relevant to the activities of the Centre. Examples of such initiatives may be: The Department of Computer Engineering, the Department of Economics and Administration, the Faculty of Engineering, the Program for Teacher Training and the Program for Research and Development at the Faculty of Education.

The new Centre will have five areas of activities:

- a) Education and learning environment
- b) Research, development, innovation and imparting knowledge (OR PUBLISHING AND DISSEMINATION)
- c) Cooperation with society and professional life
- d) Internationalisation
- e) Development of professional competence and organisation

a) Education and learning environment

The Centre will work to stimulate increased understanding critique and use of research results amongst teaching staff, students, and professionals who work with evidence based practice.

The Centre will be an important participant in making the programmes at the university colleges more evidence based. It is The Centre's ambition to contribute in the creation of a national specialist environment in evidence based practice.

The Centre will continue to develop courses for the practice field as postgraduate studies. A Masters programme in evidence based practice will be established within 1-2 years. The Centre will provide courses for other postgraduate studies, for example, the proposed Master of Clinical Nursing. A complete Ph.D. programme is planned and should be ready within a five year period. The Centre already offers Ph.D. courses in evidence based practice. The courses offered by the Centre will be internationally recognised as having high quality and will utilise the established international network in planning and shaping the programmes.

A prioritised task has been, and will continue to be, building competence in evidence based practice at Bergen University College so that the teachers will be able to meet the demands linked to their ongoing work and contribute to the Masters Degree in evidence based practice (submitted for approval June 2006).

The Centre will arrange and organise courses, conferences and postgraduate studies created for specific target groups. These courses will later be offered by different Departments at Bergen University College. The Centre's role will be to provide expertise where necessary to develop different courses. The Centre will organise annual discipline-based conferences and some international conferences.

b) Research, development, and imparting knowledge

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The Centre will work on research and development in relation to *evidence based practice*. The tasks of the Centre will be:

Research

- To contribute to projects which work towards promoting the use of evidence based knowledge and implement evidence based practice in teaching and professional work
- To provide grants for doctoral studies in evidence based practice at the Centre
- To give supervision to employees with regards to application for research and development projects
- To assist employees to publish their research results so that the research reputation of Bergen University College/HiB is improved.
- To accommodate a stimulating environment for employees and doctoral students
- To systematically perceive the needs for new knowledge in the practice field and assist in obtaining such knowledge

Development

- Offer a Masters Degree in evidence based practice in cooperation with international research environments.
- Develop competence in writing systematic reviews
- In the longer run contribute with systematic summaries in specific disciplines nationally and internationally
- Participate in international networks and work actively to establish international research projects.
- Obtain competence in evaluation methods, especially with regards to the implementation of evidence based practice in teaching and practice
- Accommodate interaction with the practice field through cooperative projects and umbrella projects where postgraduate students or finalising bachelor students participate. However, these projects must of a particularly current, topical and useful interest for the practice field.
- Initiate national networks in the university and college sector and the practice field by organising meetings, conferences, courses and postgraduate studies.

Imparting knowledge (OR PUBLISHING AND DISSEMINATION?)

- Stimulate increased dissemination of knowledge both nationally and internationally through research and development projects
- Reflect the work of the Centre on the web pages of Bergen University College.
- Contribute to publication of results for research and discipline development through discipline-specific journals, internet, media and conferences.
- Contribute to the promotion of research utilisation and evidence based practice

c) Cooperation with society and professional life

The Centre will meet current needs of society and professionals by actively profiling itself and the usefulness of evidence based practice regionally, nationally and internationally. A close professional relation is established between the Centre and the Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Health Services. This collaboration will be of major importance also in the future.

The Centre intends to seek collaboration with other university colleges nationally, with universities regionally, with regional health trusts and with local authorities. The main focus for commitment will be on already established collaborators including Helse Bergen Haukeland University Hospital and local authorities in Hordaland.

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The Centre will contribute to reinforce the management of research and developmental work centered around health professions. Also, the Centre will support the publication of the results of this work and direct it to both the general public and particular interest groups.

d) Internationalisation

The activity at the centre will be at a high level comparative to international standards. The employees of the Centre will contribute through international cooperation and networking, as well as publishing and presenting internationally.

The international contribution will be visible both within Bergen University College as well as externally. This involves inviting guest professors for short or long visits. The Centre will develop relations and projects that require academic visits abroad.

e) Development of competence and organisation

The Centre will have a multidisciplinary profile through the composition of the staff, which reflects the tasks of the Faculty. In addition to health and social specific competence, there is a particular need for information competence within the field of evidence based practice. A research librarian within the field will be integral to maintain and develop this area of evidence based practice.

A continuing central task for the Centre is to provide the education necessary for the faculty's academic staff so that they can teach evidence based principles and evidence base their teaching.

Organisation

The functions of Centre for Evidence Based Practice will to a large extent overlap with those of the Department of Research and Development (HESOF). HESOF will therefore be closed by the The Faculty and its functions transferred to the Centre.

The Centre will attend to the following three main functions: *Research and development*, *Education*, and *Publishing and dissemination*. These functions overlap and all employees of the Centre will be more or less involved in all three. However, they will have one main area of work depending on their area and level of expertise.

Research and development will primarily be carried out by staff appointed through grants for the purpose of doing research and development projects. Also, raising the competence level in the academic staff will be central.

The *Education* function will primarily relate to the Masters programme in evidence based practice and the postgraduate studies linked to the new Centre.

Publishing and dissemination will be a central function to maintain external activity and the general imparting of knowledge.

The Head of Centre, along with the administrative committee of the centre, is responsible for the development and daily operations of the Centre. The Head of Centre leads the academic activities within the centre and is responsible for the progress of the Research and development unit of the faculty. The head of the centre reports to the Dean and attends to the secretarial function in the administrative committee of the centre. This committee is led by the

dean. It is proposed that the current committee will proceed, with an observer from the Norwegian Knowledge Centre for Health Services.

Center for Evidence Based Practice

