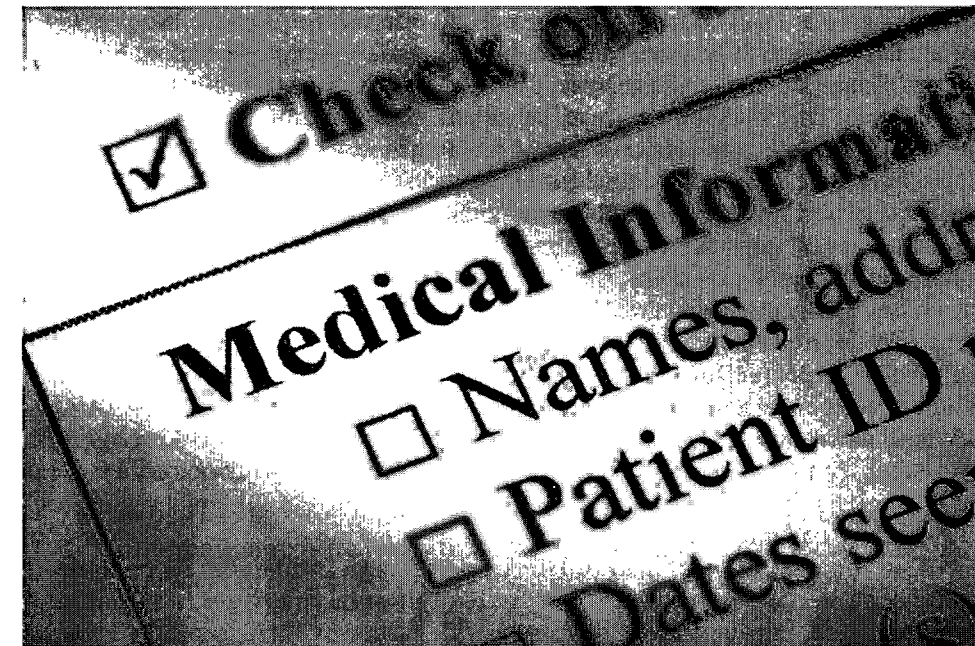


3. Become a reflective worker. A reflective worker critically appraises everything happening on the professional front and does not take anything on faith alone. He or she does not adopt an approach or methodology because it feels good or because that is the way it is “usually” done. Employ a twofold strategy: Develop the habit of reflecting on the “what,” “why,” and “how” of the work you are doing, and find the time for reflection through appropriate time management.
4. Accept responsibility for contributing to the knowledge base of the social work profession (i.e., make presentations and write manuscripts reporting the results of your interventions).
5. Most importantly, *master the process of EBP*. Ask yourself such questions as: “What has been shown to *help* . . . ?” “What treatment *works best*?” “What group therapies *improve*?” “What community-based interventions *reduce*?” (McNeece & Thyer, 2004). The questions can also be more specific as in: “What psychosocial intervention reduces *the risk of teenage pregnancy*?” “What individual therapies are the most successful in getting clients to stop *abusing crack cocaine*?” “How can schools reduce *student absenteeism*?” Or, “What treatments are effective in improving *prenatal care adherence*?” (p. 13).
6. Track down and investigate the best available evidence. Crisp (2004) has suggested that the following questions be considered in selecting the evidence to use in professional practice.
 - a. Why am I using this evidence?
 - b. Am I using this evidence because it is readily available or because I believe it to be credible?
 - c. Is the basis of the evidence methodologically sound?
 - d. Am I using this evidence without considering how appropriate it is for the context because it comes from a well-respected resource?
 - e. To what extent do personal factors impinge on my evaluation of this evidence?
 - f. Will others be convinced by this evidence?
 - g. Is it possible that there is more appropriate evidence? If so, do I have the resources (including time) to search for other evidence?
 - h. Are there reasons why this evidence cannot be applied?
 - i. Is it possible that this evidence has been superseded? (pp. 81–82).
7. Appraise the evidence. Obviously, the context in which the intervention was applied needs to be a close fit to the population and agency in which you are considering adopting the intervention. Further, you should make an assessment regarding the strength of the research methodology, the reliability of the instrument, and the soundness of the findings. Gray (2001) suggests that practitioners should filter any evidence through their own expertise and experience. That will help in determining if the evidence-based approach is adoptable or needs to be modified.
8. Evaluate progress. Questions such as “Is the new approach working?” and “Is the new program effective?” have to be answered through systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention. Monitoring and evaluating the progress of a case or a program is a must and the last vital step in the EBP process.



HIPAA protects patients' privacy in health care settings.

In summary, weave the essentials of EBP into your professional practice by:

- ♦ Treating every intervention as “an explicit, systematic, and rational problem-solving process” (Rosen, 2003, p. 201).
- ♦ Locating and employing the strongest research-supported interventions.
- ♦ Engaging in an “ongoing recursive evaluation of outcome attainment, further adjusting the intervention based on evaluative feedback” (Rosen, 2003, p. 202); and share your experience of what has worked with the professional community.

WHAT IS HIPAA?

HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–191), also known as the Kassebaum-Kennedy Act named after its sponsors, former Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) and the late Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA). This Act has had a dramatic effect upon all those who work in health care. Before we describe the changes it has brought about and the essential provisions of this law, a brief description of the antecedents of its passage will indicate its importance and set the stage for further discussion.

During the Clinton presidency, an effort for a comprehensive reform of the U.S. healthcare system failed. That failure, however, highlighted the problems of the system and the need for change. HIPAA was Congress's response to two of the system's major problems.

Problem 1: People were losing their health insurance if they left or lost their job. Insurance companies also would refuse to insure or refuse coverage for preexisting health conditions. It was difficult for families to have continuity of health care during job changes or unemployment of the breadwinner even if they could pay for the continued coverage of health insurance.