

PROPOSAL SUMMARY: Provide program description (refer to instructions for more information regarding requirements).

Rationale: Science and professional endeavors should be complementary and should inform one another (Spengler et al., 1995). Paul (1967) theorized that treatment needed to be specific to the client, to the therapist, to the problem, to the environment, and to timing considerations. With all of these complexities, how is a scientist-professional to select an intervention? Norcross (1981) reported that as a whole, counseling psychology has failed to operationalize its steps for clinical judgment. Others such as Spengler et al. (1995) have developed a model for making psychological assessments.

Method: The present paper utilized PSYCINFO to access peer-reviewed journal articles. Inclusion criteria for the present study were that articles needed to evaluate the integration of research and clinical skills. As the present study examined the current status of this integration, journal articles that were written before 1960 were excluded.

Results: Scientist-practitioners need to implement evidence-based practices. One of the best ways to do this is to utilize a PICO question (Lambert et al., 2008). Employing the PICO question enables the clinician to access the relevant research. Once the research has been accessed, it then needs to be assessed and translated to the specifics of the individual client. This is a crucial step because the characteristics of the sample population may not match those of the client. The judicious clinician must determine if the results of the study are relevant for their particular client. Finally, when treatment is applied to clients it must be evaluated. One significant way that clinicians can assess if their treatments are producing desired results is to utilize valid and reliable outcome measures that have signal feedback (Lambert et al., 2008). This enables the clinician to track client progress and make modifications to treatment where necessary.

Discussion: It is not possible for one psychologist to have an exhaustive knowledge of the research in all areas of patient care (Stricker & Trierweiler, 1995). As such, it is necessary for psychologists to develop specialties. Rodolfa et al. (2005) reported that it was an ethical responsibility for psychologists to cultivate a specialty and to operate within its parameters. Additionally, scientist-practitioners must continue to refine their model of psychotherapy over the course of their careers (Blocher, 1987). This refinement is the result of critical evaluation of the relevant literature, application to a specific population of clients, and constant self-evaluation.