**TWH K**rembil **N**ursing **A**wards

**Differences between Quality Improvement & Research Projects**

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|   | **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**  | **RESEARCH**  |
| **PROCESS**  | • Rapid cycle process: * Plan
* Do
* Study
* Act
 | * Form hypothesis or research question
* Develop protocol/IRB approval/collect data
* Analyze and interpret data
* Implement into practice change as appropriate
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| **PURPOSE**  | • a systematic, data-guided approach to improve processes or outcomes immediately  | • systematic inquiry that uses disciplined methods to answer questions or problems with a goal of developing, refining, and expanding a body of knowledge  |
| **RELEVANCE**  | • systematic inquiry that uses disciplined methods to answer questions or problems with a goal of developing, refining, and expanding a body of knowledge  | * broadly generalizable
* publication of study results with a description of how they contribute to the body of knowledge
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| **FUNDING**  | • often unfunded  | * usually requires a source
* some research is unfunded
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| **PARTICIPANTS**  | * usually restricted to internal participants
* sometimes external stakeholders or experts may be consulted
* sample size depends on number of intervention/program recipients but are typically small convenience samples
 | * may include individuals outside your setting
* sample size depends on design stage of research (i.e.. pilot testing or exploratory study versus testing), and research question
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| **KEY**  | • clearly define the outcome that needs to be improved, identify how the outcome will be measured, and develop a plan for implementing an intervention and collecting data before and after the intervention  | • scientific inquiry to answer specific research questions or test hypotheses using disciplined, rigorous methods  |
| **LITERATURE REVIEW**  | • typically doesn’t require an extensive one  | * systematic, comprehensive review to answer questions about a burning/compelling phenomenon
* gaps typically provide the impetus for developing a specific research question(s) a hypothesis(es),or both
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| **STUDY METHODS**  | * mixed methods may apply
* protocol may be flexible and confounding variables are acknowledged but not controlled
* typically rapid process limited by the availability of local resources
 | * quantitative (numeric, QN), qualitative (verbal, QL), & mixed methods using both
* QN studies tend to explore relationships among a set of variables related to the phenomenon QL studies seek to understand the deeper meaning of the involved variables
* protocol typically remains unchanged through the course of the study to limit confounding
* may take considerable time
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| **SHARING OF FINDINGS**  | • communicated within the organization  | * broad dissemination
* publications, presentations, etc.
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| **APPLICATION OF FINDINGS**  | * change local practice
* improve local program design
 | * contribute to body of knowledge that collectively informs practice and/or policy
* may also be relevant locally
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| **REB REVIEW**  | • sometimes due to ethical issues  | • all human subject research  |
| **EXAMPLES**  | 1. implementing a process to remove urinary catheters within a certain time frame
2. developing a process to improve wound-care documentation
3. improving the process for patient education for a specific chronic disease
 | 1. conducting a systematic review of studies on preventing catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI)
2. randomized controlled trial exploring new wound care methods
3. QL study to investigate the lived experiences of patients with a specific chronic disease
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