8.1: Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Justify the importance of evidence-informed practice to nursing.
- Explain how evidence-informed leaders contribute to quality, safe patient care delivery.
- Identify barriers to use of evidence within health care organizations.

Evidence-based practice can only occur if leaders plan for and provide the organizational structures and processes. Success lies in making these structures and processes “transparent” and part of normal daily business for clinicians.

—R. P. Newhouse (2007, p. 21)

This chapter will demonstrate how leaders influence those around them to make evidence-informed decisions and deliver evidence-informed care. Evidence-informed care is associated with positive outcomes for patients, such as lower rates of injury and mortality, and less burnout and turnover for nurses. Within health care settings, leaders influence organizational culture by promoting the use of evidence and critical thinking. Their quest for evidence-informed excellence is often challenged by competing concerns, such as finances, which can put patients and nurses at risk. Brave leaders are those who seek out evidence and use the best available evidence to guide them.