

GUIDE: Why We Need Evidence-Based Assessment

Topic Purpose:

The purpose of this topic is to introduce evidence-based assessment (EBA), emphasizing that evidence-based practice is not only for treatment, but for assessment as well. This topic provides data and case study examples illustrating the risks that lack of EBA practices can lead to in terms of erroneous diagnoses and treatment plans that do not meet clients' needs. This topic also introduces information to come in further modules that will address these concerns.

Video and Slides:

Length of video: 11 minutes

Content:

This video is divided into the following sections:

1. **Defining the problem:** SLPs and audiologists are too prone to base assessment choices on word-of-mouth, availability, or other convenience factors as opposed to evidence-based decisions such as psychometric data. This can introduce bias which distorts our understanding of clients and subsequent treatment decisions.
2. **Proposing solutions:** Possible solutions that will be addressed in this EBA series include updating instructional content and methods for clinical trainees, implementing more formal decision-making processes in assessment selection that will be explained in later topics (see the topic called, "A decision-making process for selecting an assessment tool for diagnosis"), and implementing the SUM process (see the topic called, "Bias in evidence-based assessment").
3. **Case studies:** Two case studies are presented at the end to demonstrate the importance of comprehensive, evidence-based assessment. Case 1 is a pediatric case regarding concerns about speech and language delay. Case 2 is an adult dysphagia example.

Activity:

The activity presents six reflective questions asking respondents to consider their own assessment practices as well as their views on aspects of evidence-based assessment. The recommendation is to use these questions for reflection and/or discussion PRIOR to having trainees engage in the video in this topic and then revisit these questions for further reflection and/or discussion AFTER viewing the video. These questions lend themselves to individual level reflection through thought or written response, as well as to group discussions. An "answer guide" is provided for these reflective questions. While there are not necessarily 'correct' or 'incorrect' responses for these reflections, the likely answers in the answer guide may help instructors anticipate responses from trainees to prepare for these discussions. The sample answers also indicate the direction we hope that trainees would move in as they adopt more analytical EBA practices.

Resource:

The Resources document provides a reference list for this topic.