

Knowledge, practice and barriers of evidence-based medicine among Malaysian doctors: A cross-sectional online survey

Albart Stephenie Ann, Abdul Hamid Norshahida, Looi Irene

Seberang Jaya Hospital

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Implementation of Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) needs clinical expertise, patient values and the best available evidence. We aimed to determine the knowledge, practice and barriers to EBM among Malaysian doctors. **Methods:** We conducted an online survey among 402 Malaysian doctors who are working in any of the government or private healthcare facilities in Malaysia from June to August 2022. The e-questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Hisham et al. (2018). It consists of eight domains related to knowledge ("EBM website", "EBM journals", "Type of studies", "Terms related to EBM"), practice ("Practice"); and barriers ("Access", "Patient preferences" and "Support"). **Results:** Less than 11.4% and 49.3% of doctors used EBM journals and websites, respectively for clinical decision-making by the doctors. Randomised control trial was the type of study that was most understood (91.8%), whereas meta-analyses were the least understood (77.3%). Test sensitivity and specificity had the highest understanding among the EBM terms (84.3%) while heterogeneity had the lowest understanding (60.2%). The practice with which doctors agreed the most was "I support EBM" (94.5%) and the least was "EBM reduces my burden" (49.3%). For the barriers, the item "I have access to the internet to practise EBM" received the maximum agreement (81.1%), while "My patient prefers me to practise EBM" received the least agreement (34.1%). **Conclusion:** Despite the fact that Malaysian doctors generally support EBM, they are not making the best use of the resources that are available for clinical decision-making. Patients' preference is the biggest barrier in EBM practice.