



# Evidence-based Practice in Hong Kong: Challenges and Promise

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# Agenda



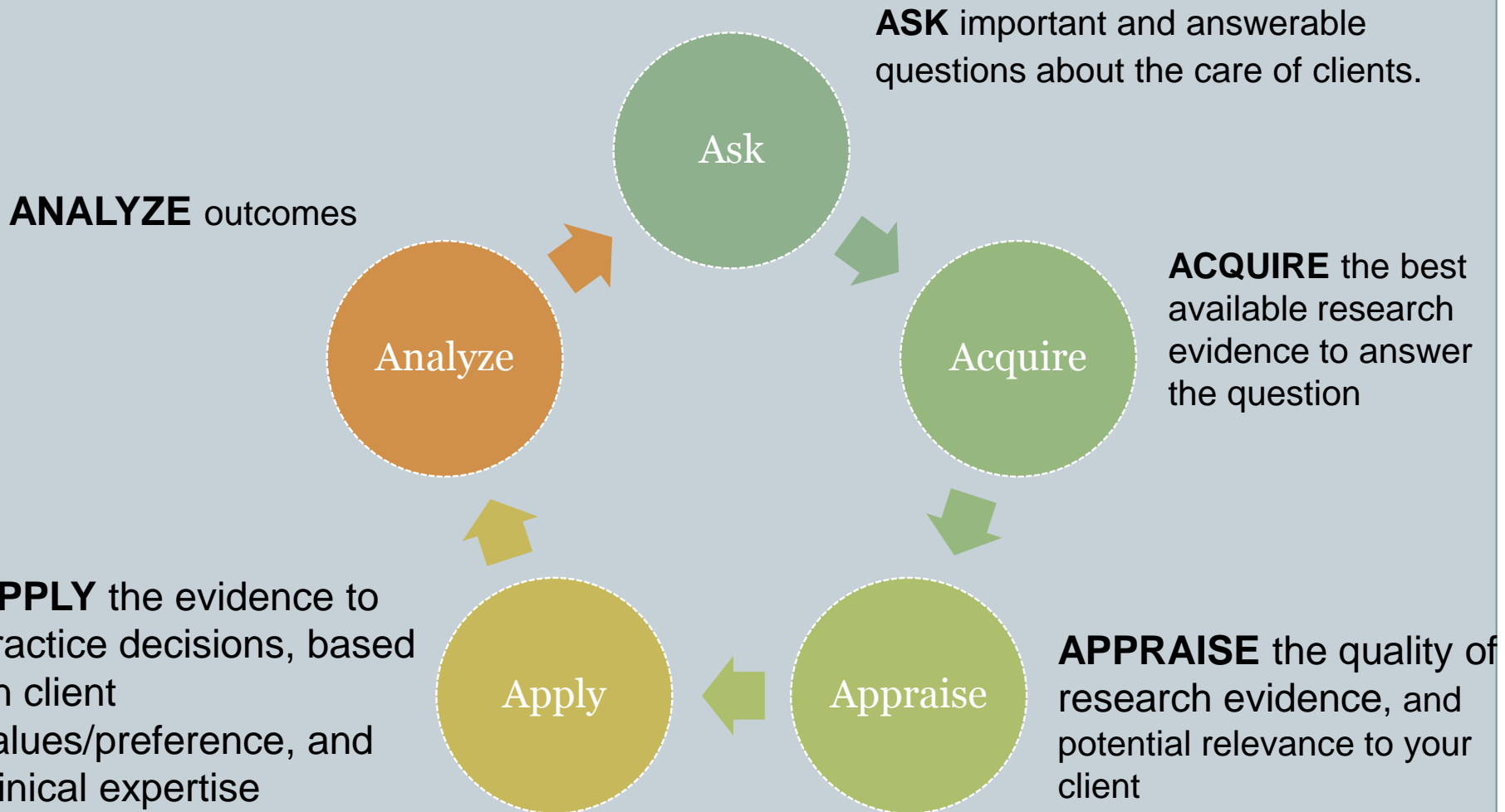
1. Definition and History of EBP
2. Why EBP?
3. Barriers of EBP implementation
4. EBP Dissemination Strategies
5. EBP in local contexts
6. Proposal for a pilot EBP project

# What is Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)?



- Dual-Meaning
- A specific program or intervention
  - Interventions or techniques with some degree of research support
    - ✦ Evidence-Based Intervention or Empirically-supported Intervention
- A process
  - Process for making practice decisions in which practitioners integrate research evidence with clinical expertise and client values

# 5As of EBP process



# What is Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)?



- Paradigm placing emphasis on use of research (scientific) evidence

# History of EBP



- EBP originated in medicine in 1990's
  - Evidence-based medicine (EBM)
- EBM has been transferred into other disciplines, including social work, in late 90's
  - Revolution OR Evolution ?
    - ✦ In 70-80's, crisis of effectiveness of social work intervention
    - ✦ Empirical Clinical Practice (ECP) movement
- EBP is now the goal of social service sectors in many developed countries (The NASW Code of Ethics)
  - The adoption of EBP has been facilitated by **increases in practice research, technological development** (internet), and **increased awareness on accountability**.

# Why EBP?



- EBP takes appropriate actions **GUIDED** by evidence
  - EBP helps us avoid decisions based solely on belief, opinion, and past experience that was not subjected to systematic and scientific test
  - EBP moves helping professionals away from authoritarian practices
- EBP helps social service professionals adopt **LIFELONG** learning
  - Fosters skills to find, evaluate, and implement scientific evidence
- EBP places clients' benefits **FIRST**
- Arguably, EBP represents the most sophisticated model to date that has been developed to guide our practice and improve the services we provide.

# Barriers to EBP implementation Gray et al. (2012)



- **Inadequate agency resources**
  - Lack of Time
  - Limited access to or funding for research
  
- **Skills and knowledge needs of human service professionals**
  - Inadequate skills, knowledge, training, or understanding of EBP
    - ✦ Social Work Education in universities
    - ✦ Lack of ongoing professional development and training
  
- **Agency culture**
  - Lack of critical questioning
  - No prior experience in utilizing research to inform practice
  - Overly bureaucratic management or administrative procedures
  
- **Insufficient research evidence in some areas**
  
- **Practitioner attitudes**
  - Suspicion about EBP itself, and the trustworthiness of research and the applicability of EBP to a human service context
  - Preference for more experiential forms of knowledge



# Strategies to overcome the barriers



- Multifaceted approaches are required.
- For individual practitioners, EBP dissemination strategies have focused on “how best to organize and disseminate new information from research findings to manageable, practitioner-friendly summaries”
- One response was


# Campbell Collaboration

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## Social Welfare ( Plain Language Summaries )




**Mindfulness-Based Interventions in schools have positive effects on cognitive and socioemotional processes but do not improve behavior and academic achievement**

This review examines the effects of school-based MBIs on cognitive, behavioral, socioemotional and academic achievement outcomes with youth in a primary or secondary school setting.

[Read the Plain Language Summary](#)

[See the Campbell Review](#)



**Better Communication between Public Services and Minority Language Speakers**

This systematic review examines whether aids for communication are effective between public services and children and youth, or families with an immigrant background. The researchers analyse relevant studies, and the team included four comparative studies, three for health services and one for education.

[Read the Plain Language Summary](#)

[See the Campbell Review](#)

# California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare

<http://www.cebc4cw.org/>



THE CALIFORNIA EVIDENCE-BASED  
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## Welcome to the CEBC:

## California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare

The mission of the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) is to advance the effective implementation of evidence-based practices for children and families involved with the child welfare system.



[View Programs](#)

- Searchable database of child welfare related programs.



[Select and Implement Programs](#)

- Guidance on how to make critical decisions regarding selecting and implementing programs

# EBP in local contexts



- **Code of Practice (SWRB)**
- **Supervision and Training**
  - 24. Social workers, who provide supervision or professional consultation, should possess and maintain necessary knowledge, skills and methodology through appropriate education, training, consultation and **research** to facilitate them to perform the tasks in professional supervision and training competently. Social workers should provide training or instructions only within their areas of knowledge or competence.
  -
- **Competence**
  - 42. When generally recognised standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps, including appropriate education, **research**, training, professional consultation, and supervision, to ensure the competence in their work and **to protect clients from harm.**

# Challenges in local contexts



- Shek et al., 2004
- EBP has been implemented minimally, although it is gaining more recognition.
  - Why? Or Why not?
- Barriers
  - Barriers in the Chinese cultural context
    - ✦ Lack of a critical culture within social service profession; concerned more about the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of doing rather than the ‘why’
  - Lack of motivation or incentive
    - ✦ With regard to salary rise or promotion, it does not really matter whether the service is evidence-based.
  - Lack of education on EBP
  - Practical barriers
    - ✦ Lack of resources (access to online databases)
    - ✦ Shortage of indigenous research

# A pilot research project

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- Objectives:

- To understand HK social workers perception of and attitude toward EBP
- To validate EBP attitude scales in HK contexts

- Methods:

- **Anonymous** Online Survey
  - ✦ Will take just 10-15 minutes to complete
  - ✦ Will NOT collect information that can be used to identify the respondents and the agencies of the respondents (with research ethics approval from CUHK)

# Long-Term Agenda

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## Pilot Study

on HK social workers' perception of and attitude toward EBP

## Empirical Research

on barriers (or facilitators) of EBP implementation among HK social workers

## Development

of strategies/programs/policies designed to encourage HK social workers to adopt EBP

## Evaluation

of the dissemination strategies/programs/policies

# Thank you!

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- We are currently recruiting the survey participants for the pilot study
- *We will start where the practitioner is!*
- If you are interested, please contact

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