

Who decides when to apply Evidence-Based Medicine?

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Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) is supposed to be one of the most important tools for medical practice related to decision-making. If we have good evidence in scientific publications that strongly recommends a practice, there is no reason not to make decisions based on that evidence. EBM has been criticized by philosophers in a few different ways, as for example, by arguing what in reality configure evidence and why randomized-control trials (RCT) should be taken as the gold-standard of evidence (Cartwright, 2011; Worrall, 2010). Recently, the Center for Evidence Based Medicine from the University of Oxford and the British Journal of Medicine published an “*Evidence based medicine manifesto for better healthcare*” (2017), recognizing some problems, especially about the quality of evidence. But also important and indirectly related to the question of evidence and directly related to the application of EBM is the role of the patient on research and on medical practice. The manifesto says that “[i]nformed decision making requires clinicians and patients to identify and integrate relevant evidence”, and because of that, recommends to “[e]xpand the role of patients, health professionals, and policy makers in research”. On this paper, I analyze one study case in order to argue that the use of the Internet for educating patients not only by giving them information but by educating for intellectual virtues is central and fundamental for a positive changing in the way EBM should be understood and applied. I call those kinds of patients *Informed Patient*, which are patients that not only read and learn about their medical condition but are patients which developed intellectual virtues that make them able to be sometimes epistemic peers related to the doctors. I argue here that the Informed Patients are patients able to help the decision-making and influence medical practice by telling which evidences should be considered and which not.