Evidence-Based Communication Interventions for People with Severe Disabilities
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National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities

Data Collection

Research Evaluation Instrument
NIC Evidence-based Practices Data Entry Instrument, 2008
Converted tool into an electronic coding form and activated online using a web-based survey platform – www.nicerentcape.com
NIC members read and independently coded 5 articles – discussed inclusion criteria
Randomly selected 50 articles & assigned 7-8 articles to 2 raters;
compared and discussed ratings & resolved differences
Modified coding form accordingly
Prior to finalizing coding form, primary authors read 6 articles independently; discussed and resolved coding differences; clarified the coding form.

Inclusion Criteria
• Communication intervention studies
• Intervention addressed ≥ 1 communication performance area
• Severe disabilities – Added criteria to definition of severe disabilities to include IQ, CA compared to receptive/expressive language age
– Erred on side of inclusion
• 117 of the original 269 met these criteria

Conclusions

What can we learn from the NIC’s work?
• Internal and external validity in reviewed studies was poor;
• Procedural fidelity difficult to assess/replicate; and
• Research rigor varied. HOWEVER...

WE work with people who have severe disabilities and who cannot communicate in typical ways.
WE can better understand communication challenges and utilize resources from the NIC to facilitate communication strategies within intervention teams.