PURPOSE: We investigated urologist perceptions of barriers to implementing evidence-based medicine in clinical practice.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: In April 2005 an Internet survey was conducted to assess American Urological Association member attitudes toward evidence-based medicine. This analysis presents the responses to an open-ended question about perceived barriers to implementing evidence-based clinical practice in urology. Two raters developed a coding scheme with 5 main categories of evidence concerns, system level factors, physician factors, patient factors and other barriers. Each rater independently assigned a category to each response. Discrepancies were resolved by consensus.

RESULTS: A total of 365 participants (72%) responded to the open-ended question, each providing up to 4 codable responses. Of the group 53% cited concerns about the evidence including the lack thereof, low quality, limited applicability and biased presentation. In addition, 37% reported system level factors such as issues of reimbursement, fear of litigation, problems with implementation, interference/bias by third parties, and expectations and attitudes of other providers as important issues. Physician factors and patient factors were further cited by 28% and 9%, respectively. In terms of the legitimacy of evidence-based medicine 9% expressed skepticism whereas 5% of respondents indicated...
that they saw no barriers to implementing evidence-based medicine in urology. CONCLUSIONS: Efforts to promote evidence-based medicine in urology should focus not only on the generation of high quality clinical research but also on its unbiased reporting and timely dissemination. Concerted efforts should be made to reduce system level factors that hinder the implementation of evidence-based care.