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## A Short History of the Scientific Method in Medicine, Rehabilitation, and Habilitation

*Supporters of evidence-based medicine say that it has many benefits: (1) it allows clinicians to draw upon the objective experience of many researchers working with accepted scientific standards; (2) it improves efficacy and efficiency of providers; (3) it decreases the use of ineffective clinical practices; (4) it promises to better inform patients and clinicians about clinical practices by offering collectively agreed upon and publicly available information about treatment options; and (5) it provides a scientific basis for the construction of health care policy.*

—Romana (2006)

### OPERATIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter the learner will be able to:

- Define *clinical research* and explore its primary purposes and its application to occupational therapy.
- Describe the seven stages in the history of medicine.
- Explain the cyclical nature of medical progress into the 21st century.
- Recognize the important contributions of medical researchers toward eliminating disease and improving the health of individuals.
- Understand the importance of methodological discoveries in diagnosis, assessment, prevention, and intervention.
- Describe the history and growth of occupational therapy and the allied health professions.
- Outline occupational therapy's role in the school system.
- Identify trends in rehabilitation research.