

Decreasing Delirium in the Adult Intensive Care Unit Marlaine G. Magee, BSN, RN, CCRN



Background

Delirium is associated with increased morbidity and mortality, longer lengths of hospital stay, increased costs, and in some cases, long-term brain dysfunction. Intensive Care Unit (ICU) associated delirium rates are as high as 80%. Patients may either be admitted with delirium, or acquire it during their ICU stay.

Aim and Objective

The aim of this project is to reduce ICU associated delirium by 10% utilizing nonpharmacologic interventions called, "Simple Measures." (SM) over a six month period. The interventions are designed to promote rest/sleep at night and to encourage activity and engagement with the care team during the day.

Current State

The Confusion Assessment Method for the ICU (CAM-ICU) is the recognized standard tool to measure the presence of ICU associated delirium. CAM-ICU documentation is a component of the ICU patient's daily assessment and is discussed during Multi-Disciplinary Rounds.

According to pre-study chart reviews, the baseline ICU associated delirium prevalence rate was 63 % (86/137).

Methods

A nurse-led quality improvement project tested a three-phase approach matching night-time and day-time interventions. Outcomes were measured using prevalence rates.

Methods Continued

- Phase I: Naturalize the environment
 2300 hours, lights down in rooms and hallways.
- 2400-0400 hours, limit sleep interruptions. "Quiet Time" sign on the door.
- "Yacker Trackers," decibel sensing devices assigned to various locations to evaluate noise levels in the unit.

Phase II: Continue Phase I

 Addition of light reducing eye masks, ear plugs and/or music/white noise.

Phase III: Continue Phase I and II

RNs and Pharmacists discouraged use (unless absolutely necessary) of prescribed medications known to alter sleep and precipitate delirium. e.g., benzodiazepines, diphenhydramine and metoclopramide.

All Phases: Activity items during daytime hours (0800-2000) for patients with dementia and acute delirium. e.g., 6-10 inch fabric sports balls, texture balls, plush animals, dolls and Tangle Toy® hand-held puzzles.



Simple Measures Team: Marlaine Magee, Jean Lucas, Kristen Roberts, Jessica Sexton



ICU Simple Measures Yacker Tracker Alarms and Observations





Recommendations

Simple Measures innovations decrease the rate of delirium for ICU patients. Scheduling rest/sleep at night while limiting noise/lights seems to be effective in reducing rates of ICU-associated delirium. Encouraging activity engagement, limiting nap periods, also seems to contribute to delirium reduction.



References

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Contact & Acknowledgements

Marlaine G. Magee BSN, RN CCRN <u>Marlaine.Magee@salemhealth.org</u>

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Jean Lucas BSN, RN, CCRN; Tamara Wallace BSN, RN, CCRN; Kristen Roberts BSN, RN, CCRN; Jessica Sexton BSN, RN; Gwen Sierra Schneider, DVM, BSN, RN, CCRN

> Salem Health Foundation Ganz

One Pearce Road Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 3T2 www.ganzworld.com

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