

Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders

NICHE



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A NURSING AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE DELIRIUM CARE

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PROBLEM: Delirium was negatively impacting a high percentage of the older adult patient population at the Miriam Hospital.

SOLUTION: A multidisciplinary protocol that included prevention, detection, and management of delirium improved clinical and financial outcomes.

Problem Identified The Miriam Hospital realized that delirium was impacting a high percentage of its older adult patient population with resolutions taking several hours to several days or weeks. Acute delirium has been defined as a disturbance of consciousness with impaired attention and or disorganized thinking.¹ Delirium is associated with increased length of stay, cost, and rates of mortality.



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Solution Formulated The delirium protocol is comprised of multiple components. A multidisciplinary surveillance process focuses on preventing, anticipating, and managing the course of delirium. Also, a team consisting of Occupational Therapy (OT), Geriatric Nurse Specialists, and Registered Nurses (RNs) administer training on the protocol for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). Activities include pre/post test, case studies, literature review, role-playing, video and discussion. In addition, group hands-on exercises with new activity tool kits support a sensory integrative approach.

The OT formulated interdisciplinary communication tools with nursing input. These tools included a behavior worksheet for CNAs to chronicle patient behaviors and triggers. A family/caregiver questionnaire was also developed to help gather detailed information for a patient-centered plan of care. The tool allowed clinicians to formulate a patient specific profile while customizing the plan of care. An educational pamphlet was also created for families, defining their role in delirium management.

NICHE Role The NICHE Geriatric Resource Nurse (GRN) core curriculum is designed for use by those at NICHE sites who train nurses in best practices for hospitalized older adults. GRNs are the foundation of system-wide improvement to achieve positive outcomes for hospitalized older adults. The NICHE program, available to hospitals throughout North America, offers evidence-based, interdisciplinary approaches to promote improved care for the hospitalized older adult.

Evaluation/Results Following training, the CNAs were tested on symptom management, multidisciplinary collaboration, interventions and activities used in the care of patients experiencing acute delirium. Pre- and post-test results revealed that the training content provided essential information to improve care delivery. Because of the training, the CNAs showed increased confidence with early identification of delirium and strategies for symptom management. The delirium training was provided as one component of the Geriatric Model of Care at The Miriam Hospital. Other nursing protocols comprising the Geriatric Model of Care include: mobility, pain, sleep, and nutrition. Recent data from the CDC indicates the Average Length Of Stay (ALOS) for patients over age 65 is 5.6 days (cdc.gov/nch/data/nhsr029.pdf, as accessed 1/22/12). At The Miriam Hospital, for patients over 65, the target population for the geriatric nursing protocols, ALOS was 5.06 days in FY 2011.

For more information Citations

1. Tullman, D. F., Fletcher, K. & Foreman, M. D. (2012). Delirium. In M. Boltz, E. Capezuti, D. Zwicker & T. Fulmer (Eds.) *Evidence-Based Geriatric Nursing Protocols for Best Practice* (4th ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc.

Others

1. Havens, D.S., Wood, S., Leeman, J. (2006). Improving Nursing Practice and Patient Care: Building Capacity with Appreciative Inquiry. *JONA*, Volume 36, Number 10, pp 463-470.
2. Sancho-Bonet, B., Klevay, A., & Kuruvella, M. (2009). Early recognition and intervention for delirium. *Stanford Nurse*, 29,15.
3. McCusker, J. (2003). The long-term prognosis of delirium. *Geriatr Aging*, 6:10, 22-27.

NICHE-related resources

1. Delirium. GRN Training. (Available at NICHE Knowledge Center, accessed via www.nicheprogram.org.)
2. Is My Patient Confused? Geriatric Patient Care Associate Training. (Available at NICHE Knowledge Center, accessed via www.nicheprogram.org.)
3. Boltz, M, Capezuti, E. Zwicker DA & Fulmer T (Eds.) (2012). *Evidence-Based Geriatric Nursing Protocols for Best Practice* (4th ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc.

About NICHE

NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) is designed to help hospitals improve the care of older adults. A program of the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing at New York University College of Nursing, the vision of NICHE is for all patients 65-and-over to be given sensitive and exemplary care. The mission of NICHE is to provide principles and tools to stimulate a change in the culture of health care facilities to achieve patient-centered care for older adults. For more information visit www.nicheprogram.org.

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