

# NICHE



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## NICHE SOLUTION #31 • 2013

### SUPPORTING A FAMILY-CENTERED CARE MODEL IN ICU — IMPLEMENTATION OF A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

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**PROBLEM:** Older adult patients in the ICU and their families are anxious and feel marginalized, and the care team alone cannot always satisfactorily meet their needs.

**SOLUTION:** Development of an integrated Family Centered Care Model including a Volunteer Program to assist the team and improve the ICU experience.

**Problem Identified** Forty percent of ICU beds in the hospital are occupied by patients 75-years-or-older. The critically ill older adult patient is at risk for a multitude of clinical and psychosocial complications and their families are equally vulnerable and in crisis. Patients and families desire information, inclusion in decision-making, respect, emotional support, personalized care and human kindness. Yet families are often marginalized in the process of addressing the patient's clinical needs and nurses have difficulty finding time to provide support, comfort and meaningful social interaction with both the patient and family.



## Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders

**Solution Formulated** The volunteer initiative started in 2010 was designed to create an integrated team approach that shifted focus to the family and patient. Implementation of the program involved stakeholder analysis, development of a collaborative strategic plan, role description and engagement of volunteers. Components of the project included volunteer role orientation, care team education and qualitative survey development to assess effectiveness. The interdisciplinary team consisted of volunteer services, RNs, physicians, unit secretaries, ward aides and human resources. Evaluation of the program effectiveness was assessed through satisfaction surveys and patient compliments/complaints.

### Volunteer Roles:

- Provide Welcome Packages to patients and/or family and review contents with them
- Orient new families to the unit and the hospital
- Act as a liaison between the family and care team during a clinical crisis
- Provide comfort measures to family members (tea, coffee, water or a warm blanket)
- Provide companionship to patients and/or family, offering encouragement and conversation
- Document activities in communication binder and communicate key concerns/findings to nursing staff
- Conduct Family Satisfaction Survey

**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 Critical Care Nursing of Older Adults course, in addition to providing guidelines for important critical care clinical issues, describes the role of the critical care environment influencing the older adult's recovery.

**Evaluation/Results** Results of a survey of staff readiness for the introduction of volunteers in the ICU that included RNs, unit secretaries and ward aides was exceptionally positive indicating support for the initiative and readiness to implement. Preliminary outcomes included increased family/patient satisfaction, fewer formal complaints and improved staff satisfaction.

### For more information

1. Foreman, M.D., Millisen, K., & Fulmer, T.T. (2010). *Critical Care Nursing of Older Adults Best Practices* (3rd ed.) New York: Springer Publishing Company. (Available at [http://www.springerpub.com/samples/9780826110961\\_chapter.pdf](http://www.springerpub.com/samples/9780826110961_chapter.pdf))
2. Balik B, Conway J, Zipperer L, Watson J. *Achieving an Exceptional Patient and Family Experience of Inpatient Hospital Care*. IHI Innovation Series white paper. Cambridge, Mass.:Institute for Healthcare Improvement; 2011 (Available on [www.IHI.org](http://www.IHI.org)).
3. Davidson J. Family-Centered Care: Meeting the Needs of Patients' Families and Helping Families Adapt to Critical Illness. *Crit Care Nurse* 2009; 20:28-34
4. Frampton S, Gilpin L, Charnel P. *Putting Patients First: Designing and Practicing Patient-Centered Care*. Jossey Bass, San Francisco, CA, 2003
5. Henneman E, Cardin S. Family-Centered Critical Care: A Practical Approach to Making It Happen. *Crit Care Nurse* 2002; 22:12-19
6. Davidson, J.E., et al. (2007). Clinical practice guidelines for support of the family in the patient-centered intensive care unit: American College of Critical Care Medicine Task Force 2004–2005. *Critical Care Medicine*, 35 (2), 605-622.

### NICHE-related resources

1. Boltz, M. & Davey, J., NICHE Critical Care Nursing of Older Adults. (Available at <http://elearningcenter.nicheprogram.org/course/view.php?id=93>)
2. Balas, M.C., Casey, C.M., & Happ, M.B. (2012). Chapter 31: Comprehensive Assessment and Management of the Critically Ill (pp. 600-627). In Boltz, M., Capezuti, E., Fulmer, T., & Zwicker, D. (eds.) (2012). *Evidence-Based Geriatric Nursing Protocols for Best Practice* (4th ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company. (Available at <http://www.springerpub.com/product/9780826171283#.UKvz60Oe80p>)

### About NICHE

NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) is an international program designed to help hospitals improve the care of older adults. 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. NICHE, based at NYU College of Nursing, consists of over 450 hospitals and health care facilities throughout North America. For more information visit [www.nicheprogram.org](http://www.nicheprogram.org).

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