Impact of Technology on Nurse-Patient Interactions: A Skill-Based Method for Improvement

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Problem/Key Objectives

- Technical proficiency required for computer use by nurses due to the EHR

- High quality patient care expected while using technology at the bedside

- Top box scores on 'communication with nurses' section of HCAHPS surveys at 76% over past year

- Nurses perceived as inattentive and uncaring while using computers at the bedside

- Increased risk of nurses working with more focus on the computer than on the patient

- Essential component of high quality health care is effective communication skills

- Patient outcomes and patient satisfaction impacted by communication barriers

- Improve patient satisfaction with a balance of technical aspects of computer use and the art of nursing
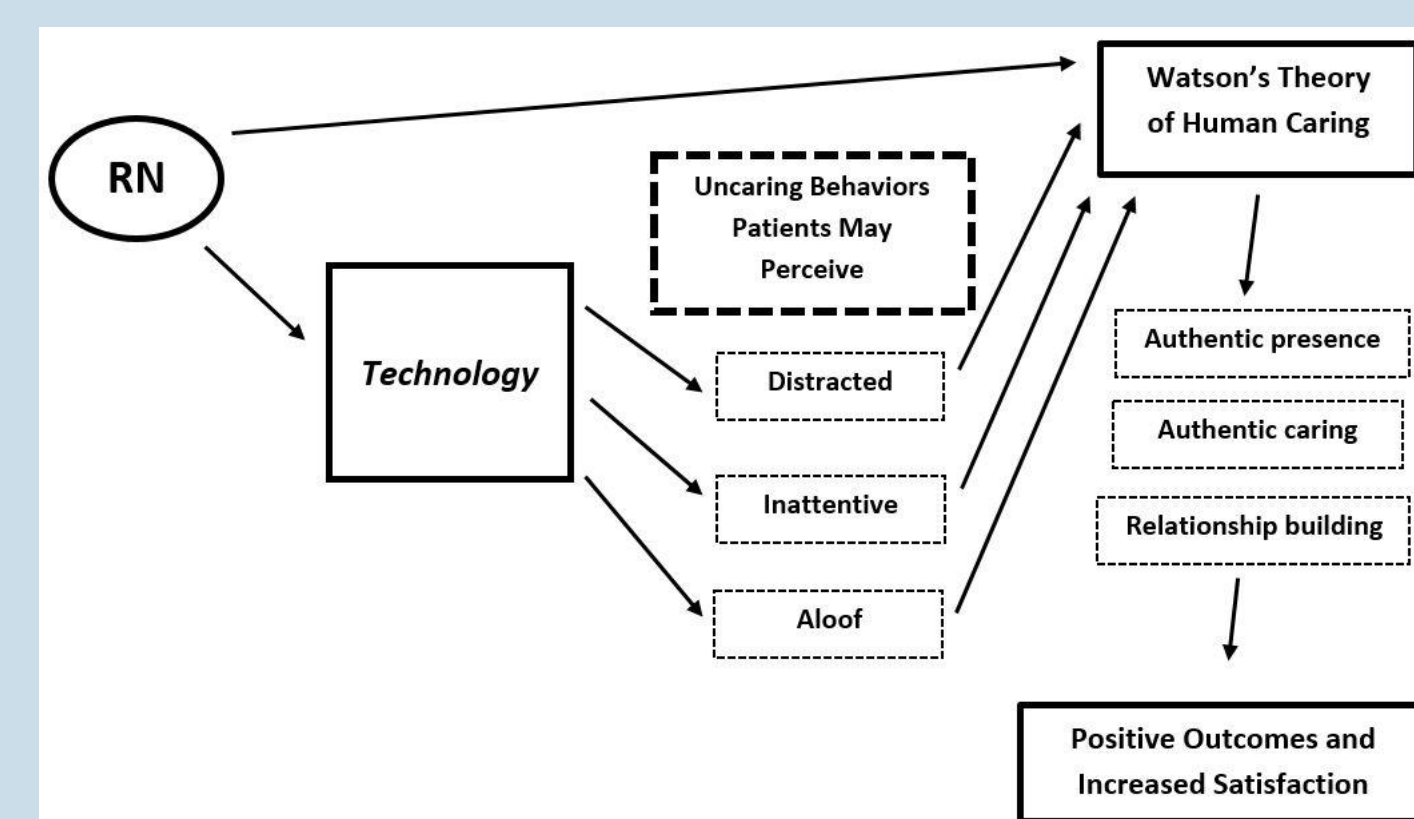
Project Purpose

The purpose of this project was development and presentation of a skill-based approach called Caring with Tech that will assist nurses to optimize interactions with patients during use of bedside technology.

Framework

Watson's Theory of Human Caring

- A caring occasion occurs between nurse and patient

- A sense of being intentionally present creates authenticity

- Nurse's attention should be on the other individual for this period of time

- Human touch and caring moments during nurse-patient interactions must be preserved

- Practice the Art of Nursing to cultivate mindfulness in busy, technology-rich work environments

"Caring is the essence of nursing."

Jean Watson

Participants and Setting

- 346-bed community hospital in northeast Alabama

- 28 Registered Nurses and 5 unlicensed Multi-Skill Technicians employed on 30-bed orthopedic/medical unit

- 85% female, 15% male with a mean age of 34.8 years

- Years in nursing 3 months – 40 years

- Pre- and post-tests administered

- Data collected re: staff comfort with computer use and perceived importance of empathy in patient care

Description of the Project

- Educational sessions developed and promoted as an Awareness Campaign

- Research sources provided validation of the clinical problem

- Evidence of the problem locally, nationally, and internationally

- Components of Caring with Tech detailed along with skill-based approach to use in daily nursing practice
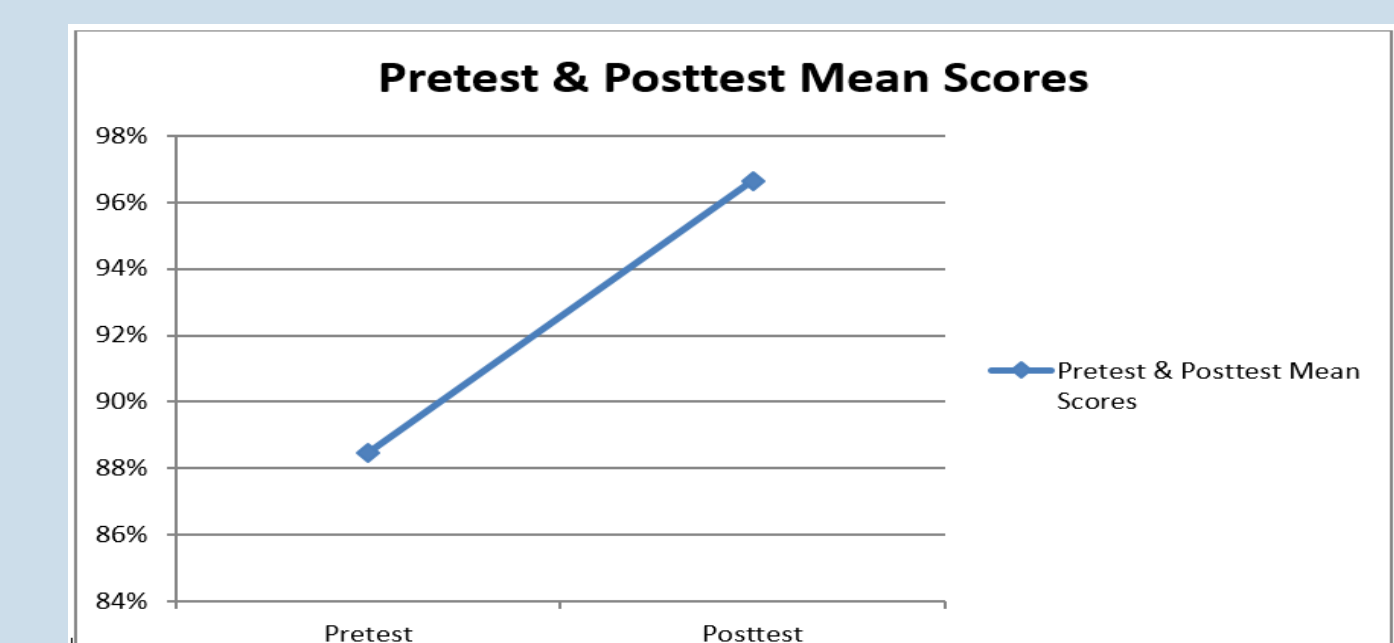

- Caring with Tech adapted from:

  - a skill-based program for physicians to remain patient-centered during exam room visits (Duke et al., 2013)
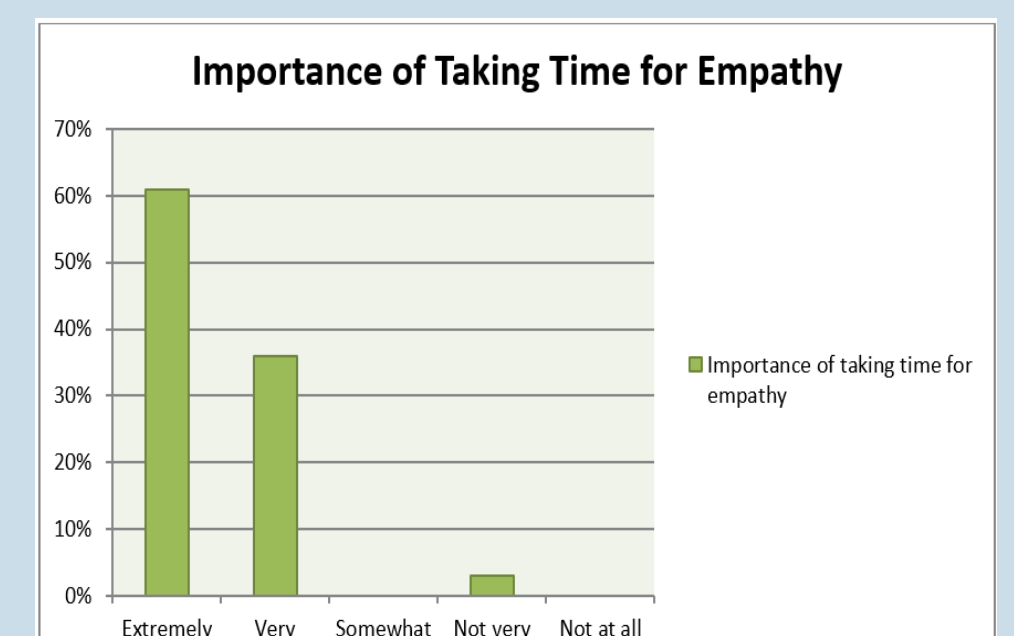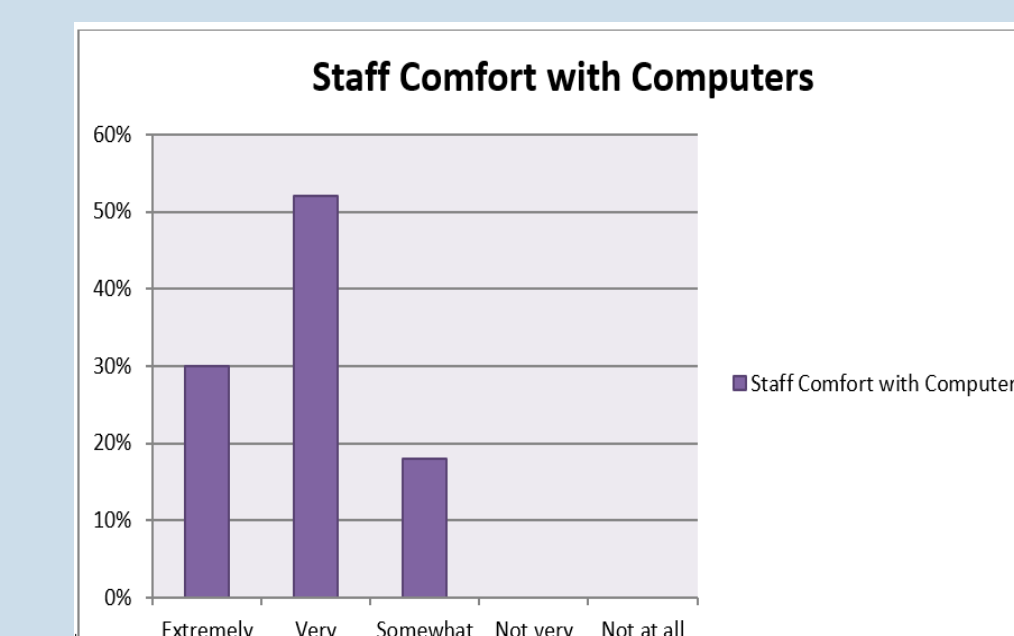 - relational elements of the Fundamentals of Caring Framework (Feo et al., 2017)

Results

- Paired t-test analysis revealed statistically significant learning occurred with p value <.05

- Participants did better on post-tests showing statistical significance of the Caring with Tech educational content

- Only 30% of participants were extremely comfortable with using computers

- 61% of participants felt it extremely important to take time for empathy during patient interactions

Clinical Relevance

- Caring with Tech is a program that increases knowledge and awareness of practicing the art of nursing while using mobile technology.

- The components of Caring with Tech can be a valuable tool to assist with positive patient outcomes and increased patient satisfaction with the hospital experience.

- Caring with Tech is an excellent supplement to incorporate into computer training in healthcare facilities.

- Caring with Tech can be adapted for use in any healthcare facility whose focus is improvement of patient satisfaction.

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