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Family Needs in the Intensive Care Unit: A Scoping Review

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Purpose:

Meeting the needs of family members (FMs) of patients in Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is a global concern which impact on family satisfaction. Family satisfaction is a key factor in the drive towards the implementation of Patient-Family Centred Care (PFCC) (Institute for Patient and Family Centred Care 2014).

Therefore, this scoping review seeks to investigate the extent of literature on the needs of family members of patients in ICUs.

Methods:

We searched eight computerized databases over the last ten years (2008 to 2019). All studies and quality improvement projects that included the terms family needs, adult ICU, satisfaction, anxiety and depression from the title/abstract were considered eligible for inclusion. Studies conducted outside of the adult ICU, including paediatric patients and prior reviews were excluded..

Results:

The search identified 2357 articles of which 52 studies met the criteria and were included. Most of the studies were quantitatively (41/52, 79%), conducted in different ICU settings and outside the United States (44/52, 84%). Although with varied study designs, mostly cross sectional (16/52, 30.7%) and descriptive (15/52, 28.8%).

Three key themes identified from this review were the needs of FMs, their satisfaction and the psychological impact of patient's admission to ICU on the FMs.

The needs of FMs were reported in 28/52 of the reviewed studies, majority of which were quantitatively conducted. The needs for assurance, information, support, proximity and comfort were identified in line with the novel work by Molter (1979) & Leske (1984).

The needs to have the FMs' questions answered honestly and to be assured that their loved ones is receiving the best treatment has been a consistent highly ranked need among the family needs. This is followed by the need for consistent, accurate and concise information regarding the patients' condition and progress.

FMs in 14/52 of the studies reported a high level of satisfaction with care and decision making in the ICU. Although, some FMs still reported some level of dissatisfaction with regards to the lack of informational support, waiting room and the ICU environment itself. Unmet needs of the FMs was discovered to be responsible for the dissatisfaction reported by the FMs especially with regards to comfort, information and support needs. 15/52 of the studies dealt with the psychological impact of ICU admission on the FMs and factors such as female gender, spouse, parents and sibling of the patients were found to be associated with development of anxiety and depression among the FMS.

Conclusion:

Despite studies conducted on needs and satisfaction of family members, findings revealed that the unmet needs and dissatisfaction with care and decision making are still having a negative impact on the implementation of PFCC. As such, future research needs to focus more on collaboration with family member as well as conduct more randomized clinical trials for the best means of meeting the family needs.

Title:

Family Needs in the Intensive Care Unit: A Scoping Review

Keywords:

Adult intensive care unit, Anxiety & Depression and Family needs

Abstract Summary:

Meeting the needs of family members in the ICU as a means of implementing patients-family centredness has been a global concern over decades. Therefore, it becomes imperative to review literature on the needs of family members of critically ill patients and its psychological impact on the family members.

References:

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Author Summary: I am a Professional nurse midwife and an intensive care nurse with keen interest in family centered care. Having discovered from my previous study on

patients experience of mechanical ventilation, the effect of non-involvement of family member in the intensive care unit, the need to review the identified needs of family member in the intensive care unit became imperative as a basis for an ongoing study on structuring measures of meeting their needs.

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