

Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to examine the needs and comfort level of nurses' caring for pediatric-sized adult patients in the adult intensive care unit (ICU) setting of a large teaching hospital.

Background

- Due to advances in healthcare practices, children with chronic childhood illnesses are beginning to survive into adulthood (McDonnell, Kocolas, Roosevelt, & Yetman, 2010).
- Current literature focuses on the importance of transitioning these patients into the adult hospital setting, but neglects to address the needs of the adult care nurses who will care for this unique population.

Methods

- A mixed methods study was conducted to identify nurses' comfort level and needs when caring for pediatric-sized adult patients in the adult intensive care unit (ICU) setting of a large teaching hospital in the Southeast.
- 50 nurses from the medical ICU, surgical-trauma ICU, and the neurosurgical ICU participated in this study.
- This study used a short survey consisting of 14 closed-ended and open-ended questions.

Objectives

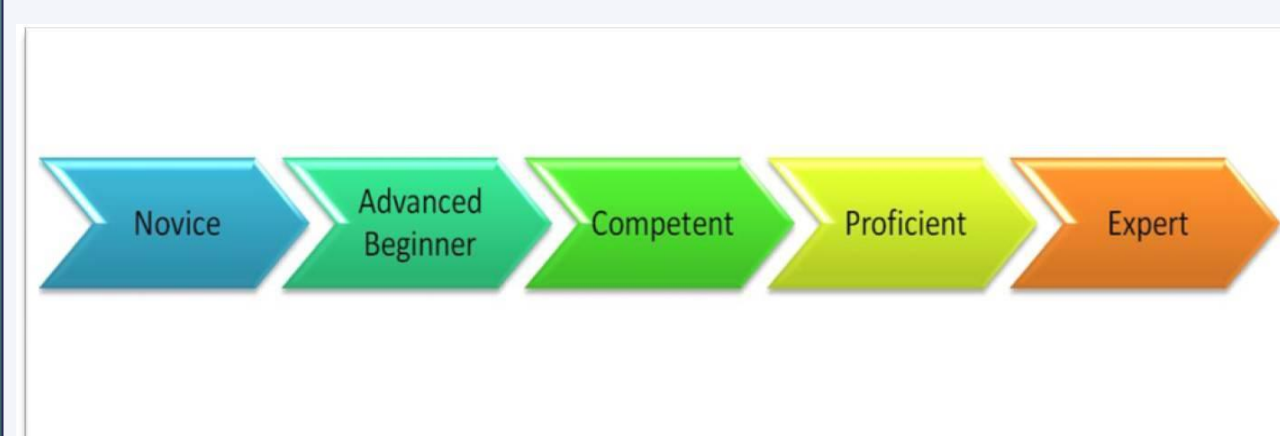
- Identify what adult care nurses need to competently care for transitioning pediatric-sized adult patients
- Develop an education plan to better prepare adult care nurses in caring for this population.

The objectives were accomplished by:

- Identifying the nurses' perception of their ability to provide appropriate, competent care in the adult ICU setting, as well as to pediatric-sized adult patients, by having the nurses determine where they rank according to Patrice Benner's novice to expert scale
- Having nurses identify what resources, skills, and education is necessary to provide competent, safe care to the pediatric-sized adult patient in the adult setting.

Theoretical Framework

Through the Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition, Patricia Benner incorporates the five levels of nursing proficiency. This novice-to-expert scale was used as a guideline to recognize where the majority of ICU nurses feel they belong.



Results of Novice-to-Expert Perception

How would you describe your ability to provide appropriate, competent care in the adult ICU setting?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Novice	0.0%	0
Advanced Beginner	0.0%	0
Competent	20.0%	10
Proficient	48.0%	24
Expert	32.0%	16
<i>answered question</i>		50
<i>skipped question</i>		0

How would you describe your ability to provide appropriate, competent care to the pediatric-sized adult patient?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Novice	40.0%	20
Advanced Beginner	24.0%	12
Competent	26.0%	13
Proficient	8.0%	4
Expert	2.0%	1
<i>answered question</i>		50
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Education Plan

Class 1: Initial Introduction into Caring for Pediatric-Size Patients

- Identify normal vital signs and fluid rates for small stature patients
- Identify Common Sizes of pediatric equipment
- Demonstrate how to operate pediatric IV pumps
- Identify common medication dosages and demonstrate competency calculating formulas most commonly used with weight-based medications through successful completion of a medication administration test

Class 2: Pediatric Care in the ICU

- Demonstrate the ability to incorporate the 8 nurse competencies of the synergy model into care of the pediatric-sized adult in the ICU setting
- Identify signs of deterioration
- Evaluate assessment data and develop a plan of care for pediatric-sized adult patients with a chronic childhood illness
- Run a mock code on a pediatric-size patient

Class 3: Common Chronic Childhood Illnesses

- Define chronic childhood illness
- Identify the effects of chronic illness on the child and the family
- Discuss the pathophysiology of common chronic childhood illnesses
- Identify primary nursing interventions via successful completion of case studies

Class 4: Family-Centered Care

- Define family-centered care
- Acknowledge and discuss the stressful impact of hospitalization and receiving care in a new environment
- Identify methods of involvement for the patient and family members
- Identify supportive resources to assist in providing family-centered care

Nursing Implications

- Through the initiation of an education program, the knowledge and comfort of nurses caring for pediatric-sized adult patients in the adult setting can be increased.
- This increased knowledge and comfort has the potential to directly impact the care the patients' receive as well as the comfort of the parents.
- Nursing education should include the basics of caring for a pediatric-sized patient, caring for a pediatric-sized patient in the ICU setting, common chronic childhood illnesses, and providing family-centered care.

Future Implications

Further research might investigate the outcomes of this education plan and re-evaluate the nurses' perception of their ability to provide appropriate, competent care to the pediatric-sized adult patient utilizing Patricia Benner's novice to expert theory.