

Title:

Nurse Education: Improving Quality of Care for Intellectually Disabled Adults in the Acute Care Setting

Donna Harmon, DNP

Heart and Vascular Services, Baystate Medical Center, Springfield, MA, USA

Session Title:

Education for the Disabled Patient

Slot:

I 14: Monday, 30 October 2017: 3:45 PM-4:30 PM

Scheduled Time:

4:05 PM

Keywords:

Acute Care, Intellectual Disability and Nursing Education

References:

Friese, T., & Ailey, S. (2015). Specific standards of care for adults with intellectual disabilities. *Nursing Management*, 22(1), 32-37.

Jones, J., McQueen, M., Lowe, S., Minnes, P., & Rischke, A. (2015, September). Interprofessional education in Canada: Addressing knowledge, skills, and attitudes concerning intellectual disability for future healthcare professionals. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, 12(3), 172-180. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jppi.12112>

Read, S., & Rushton, A. (2013). Cultivating understanding of health issues for adults with intellectual disability. *Nurse Education Today*, 33, 1020-1025. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2012.03013>

Abstract Summary:

Implementation of an evidence-based quality improvement project to improve the care of the intellectually disabled adult through an interprofessional educational program for acute care nurses.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
Identify two medical complications commonly associated with this population	1. Medical issues A. Intellectual Disabilities i. Associated Diagnosis ii. Medical Issues Key Challenges iii. Common Medical Issues iv. Systems Issues v. Nursing Approach
Recognize three challenges in providing care for this patient population	A. Communication B. Environment C. Behaviors
Identify three effective strategies for caring for this population	1. Care Planning A. Staffing B. Care giver role strain C. Discharge planning

Abstract Text:

The U.S. Surveillance of Health of People with Intellectual Disabilities, A White Paper (2009), reported people with intellectual disability (PWID) are more likely to have complex conditions, limited access, missed cancer screenings, poorly managed chronic conditions, undetected poor vision, and mental health issues. Research has shown there continues to be a gap in the educational preparation of healthcare

providers in the care of people with intellectually disabilities; this gap contributes to the substandard quality of care, and increased morbidity and mortality. Best practices for this population include education of the healthcare provider. Education can result in changes in attitudes, perceived knowledge, comfort level, and skills in caring for people with intellectual disabilities (Friese & Ailey, 2015; Jones et al., 2015; Read & Rushton, 2013).

A quality improvement project aimed at improving the knowledge and practices of acute care nurses caring for adults with intellectual disabilities was conducted at an academic medical center. Baseline data from the nurses revealed limited knowledge and experience in caring for adults with intellectual disabilities in the acute care setting. The objectives of a two-hour educational program provided to nurses were to articulate the best practices in caring for this patient population, discuss the patient and family needs, explain the nursing challenges caring for this population, identify 2 Signs/symptoms of the most common medical complications associated with this population, list 3 strategies for caring for this population and recognize the unique needs of this patient population. After the training nurses reported increased knowledge, 94.4% of the attendees were inspired to learn more about the subject and 88.9% reported they would apply the new knowledge to their practice.

Improving the knowledge and skill set of the nurses caring for the intellectually disabled adult in the acute care setting improves the quality of care and has the potential to decrease the morbidity and mortality rate. This program further supports the need for expanding nursing curriculums to include the care of this population over the lifespan.

This educational program was recorded and uploaded to the hospital employee YouTube channel to enable continued education of additional nurses and sustainability of the quality improvement program.