

A Culture of Safety: Nursing Rounds As Falls Prevention Best Practice
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The purpose is to describe the effect of hourly nursing rounds on prevention of falls in hospitalized patients. Implication for practice: The information presented will increase nurses' knowledge regarding the effectiveness of fall prevention nursing activities. Recommendation: direct care nurses making hourly point-of-care rounds on their clinical units will experience positive outcomes in preventing patient falls.

Problem: National Patient Safety Goal #9, "reduce patient harm resulting from falls", is a major concern in hospitals. Falls are the most common adverse event reported in acute care facilities. Of patients who fall, 20-30 % suffer injuries that reduce mobility and independence, and increase the risk of premature death. By 2020 the cost of fall injuries is expected to reach 32.4 billion dollars.

Evidence on patient falls published in professional journals indicate that clinicians have focused attention on the following: 1) identification of risk factors, 2) development of fall assessment inventories, and 3) education of staff regarding patient falls. Nevertheless, there has been a lack of research in the area of outcome measurement. Specifically, which nursing interventions create a culture of safety for hospitalized patients? Strategy: Direct care nurses determined that a Fall Prevention Program which focused on providing hourly bedside visits to patients was the nursing strategy most successful in preventing patient falls. Evaluation/Results: Data from the pilot unit indicated that after hourly nursing rounds were initiated no patient falls occurred for a two month period. Practice change: Hourly rounds have been expanded to other clinical units, and other nurse-sensitive patient care outcomes are currently being studied in relation to hourly nursing rounds (ie, skin care, and patient satisfaction).

Bibliography:

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