

Positive Effect of Evidence-Based Nursing Strategies on Patient Outcomes
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Problem: Over the past decade patient satisfaction has emerged as an important measure of patient service quality. Patient perception of services provided is a key factor in determining health care organizations' competitive advantage and survival. Therefore, evidence-based practice nursing strategies which improve patient safety, comfort and satisfaction need to be identified and implemented.

Evidence: Patient satisfaction scores, measured by Press-Ganey data, and quality data on patient falls indicated that opportunity for improvement existed on a medical/surgical unit in a Magnet-designated community hospital in New York State.

Strategy: This evidence-based nursing practice project utilized a non-experimental design. Unit-specific patient satisfaction data and quality data regarding patient falls were analyzed pre/post implementation of two innovative evidence-based practice (EBP) nursing strategies.

Practice Change: Significant improvements in patient care outcomes were realized as a result this EBP nursing project. Therefore, these nursing strategies are being applied to all the patient care units in the hospital. Quality outcomes are being measured.

Evaluation: The EBP nursing strategies were: 1) "Response To Call Bell" policy; 2) "Change-of-Shift Nursing 'Hand-Off' Report at the Patients' Bedside" protocol. "How well your pain was controlled" and "Promptness of response to call bell" were patient satisfaction items analyzed. In addition, response time to call bells was measured using data from the Hill-Rom nurse call bell system.

Results: Findings indicated that following the implementation of a "Response To Call Bell" policy and a protocol requiring that change-of-shift nursing "Hand-Off" report be given at the patients' bedside, there was a significant decrease in patient falls. Patient satisfaction scores increased significantly in the area of promptness of response to call bells and pain control. Another key finding was that the amount of time nurses spent at the bedside of patients increased by 180-240 minutes per 12 hour shift.

Recommendations: Important patient safety, comfort and satisfaction outcomes can be improved through the utilization of innovative evidence-based nursing strategies. These strategies are cost neutral and have significant impact on the healthcare experience of hospitalized patients.

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