THE IMPACT OF A SCRIPT BASED COMMUNICATION INTERVENTION ON PATIENT SATISFACTION WITH PAIN MANAGEMENT

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Significance

Pain is a common complaint among hospitalized patients with a variety of diagnoses.
An estimated 100 million Americans and 1.5 billion individuals globally suffer from chronic pain.
Pain has a negative impact on many aspects of a patient’s life including quality of life, sleep, daily life activities, and employment status.
Pain is associated with higher rates of depression.
Despite scientific advancements in managing pain, pain is a common complaint among hospitalized patients with a variety of diagnoses.

Methodology

A prospective, quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design was used. This study included seven monthly assessments: two times before the intervention and five times during and after the intervention.
The study was conducted on two units which provided care for patients with variety of medical-surgical conditions in a hospital located in an academic health sciences center in the southern United States.

Purpose

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention (script based communication, use of white boards, hourly rounding) related to pain management on patient satisfaction with staff’s management of pain.

Instruments

The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey.
Nurses’ Satisfaction Survey

Script used by nurses on the intervention unit

“We are going to do everything that we can to help keep your pain under control. Your pain management is our number one priority. Given your (condition, history, diagnosis, status), we may not be able to keep your pain level at zero. However, we will work very hard with you to keep you as comfortable as possible.”

Results

Figure 1. Mean scores for item “Pain is well controlled by staff” over time stratified by group

Figure 2. Mean scores for item “Staff is doing everything to help with pain” over time stratified by group

Discussion

Previous studies showed that ineffective communication between health care providers and patients about pain can impact negatively patients’ satisfaction with pain management.

Using a clear and consistent communication between patients and nurses related to pain led to a significant improvement in patient satisfaction with pain management over time.

This intervention not only improved patients’ satisfaction with their pain control but also increased their satisfaction with healthcare providers’ performance in relieving their pain.

It also important to note that the effect of script based communication intervention may require time to be attained.

Conclusion & Clinical Implications

Relieving patients’ pain is essential. Nurses are in a unique position to play this role. Using clear and consistent communication between patients and nurses related to pain can improve patient perception of nurses’ performance in relieving their pain. This simple and effective intervention may improve patients’ lives and reduce healthcare expenses.

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