A Method to Enhance Nurses' Knowledge About Falls Reduction Strategies

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PROBLEM

- Nursing knowledge plays an important role in preventing and managing falls in acute hospitals.
- An educational needs assessment indicated a falls educational intervention was needed for the medical surgical and correctional health care nurses at a large county hospital.

PURPOSE

- To increase knowledge about the hospital's fall policy in medical surgical and correctional health care nurses via implementation of a falls educational intervention

BACKGROUND

- The educational needs assessment was led by a clinical educator and a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).
- Staff nurses, management, clinical education and CNS all participated in the educational needs assessment.
- All who participated in the educational needs assessment agreed that a falls educational intervention was needed.
- Additional supporting information included audits that revealed fall risk interventions were not being implemented consistently, and, per Risk Management, there were improperly completed fall causation reports and other documentation issues that needed to be addressed.

METHODS

- The falls educational intervention was designed by a CNS and two staff nurses.
- The falls educational intervention consisted of an educational poster based directly from hospital policy and included:
  - Fall risk assessment
  - High-risk alert requirements
  - Interventions
  - Contributing medications
  - Patient/family education
  - Procedure post-fall
- Pre- and post-tests were administered to assess knowledge, and a survey was administered to further assess the falls educational intervention.
- The survey was a 4-point Likert Scale with 1=strongly disagree and 4=strongly agree (higher scores equaling a more positive response).

RESULTS

- Twenty-four nurses completed the pre-test, and 72 completed the post-test
- Out of the 72 nurses who completed the post-test, 24 of them also completed the pre-test.
- For question number three, "List four items that alert other hospital personnel that patient is a fall risk," the mean pre-test score was 54%, and the mean post-test score was 100%.
- Question number four evaluated proper fall risk scoring.
- For question number four, the mean pre-test score was 33% and the mean post-test score was 75%.
- Seventy-one out of the seventy-two participants approached completed the survey.
- Three surveys were eliminated due to duplicate circling of answers for a total of 68 remaining.
- The mean survey score was 3.28.
- For survey item, "The information I received from the Falls poster will help me assess my patients for fall risk more accurately" the mean survey score was 3.38.

CONCLUSIONS

- Descriptive statistical findings indicate the poster may have an impact on pre- and post-test scores.
- Thus, there is a need for further analysis.

IMPLICATIONS

- Further education of the fall risk tool may be needed.
- A t-test for unequal groups, correlations, additional descriptive statistics will be applied to questions to determine their relevance.

Falls Poster Survey

Falls Poster Survey

Please circle the response that most represents how you feel.

1. The information I received from the Falls poster will help me assess my patients for fall risk more accurately.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

2. I learned something new about falls.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

3. The Falls poster was easy to understand.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

4. I feel my overall knowledge about falls has increased.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

5. I am more aware of what medications may contribute to falls.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Fall Post-Test

Fall Post-Test

1. List 3 times a patient should be assessed for falls with the Fall Risk Assessment Tool?
_____   _____   _____

2. Patients with a fall risk score of _____ or more are at high risk for falls.

3. List 4 items that alert other hospital personnel that a patient is a fall risk.
_____   _____   _____   _____

4. What would a patient's fall risk score be if they had impaired mobility and generalized weakness? _____

5. List 2 or more medications that can contribute to falls.

6. If a fall is witnessed or a patient is found on the floor, in addition to an incident report a _____ _____ report must be completed.

REFERENCES

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