

USE OF A DAY ROOM TO PREVENT FUNCTIONAL DECLINE

Cynthia Shields, MSN, NP-C

Background

The Acute Care of the Elderly Unit at St. John Macomb-Oakland Hospital is a 27-bed acuity-adaptable unit that opened in July of 2015. Research has found that hospitalization increases the risk of physical deconditioning and functional decline, resulting in a loss of independence. To address the needs of older adult patients, a Day Room was created to encourage mobility and participation in activities that promote cognitive function.

Literature Review

Older adults are at risk for functional decline during hospitalization, and the risk increases relative to age. As many as 33-50% of older adults experience this complication, resulting in increased mortality, prolonged length of stay and long-term care admissions. Those with a lower baseline in ADLs and decreased cognitive function face the greatest risk, along with the risk for a decline in baseline functioning after discharge. Nursing practices that encourage decreased mobilization, and isolation while hospitalized are modifiable factors that lead to loss of function. An environment that enables ambulation, activities that keep the mind engaged and maintaining a daily schedule can prevent functional decline (deVos, et al., 2012; Boltz, et al., 2010).



Goal

The goal of this project is to educate patients and their families about functional decline and to increase patient participation in activities offered in the dayroom. Secondary goals include increasing patient and family utilization of community resources, and increasing employee participation and satisfaction.

Method

Patient Care Technicians (PCTs) were recruited to survey all patients over a one week period. Data was collected to determine which activities and time slots were preferred by patients. Handouts were developed to educate patients and family members about the role of the Day Room in preventing functional decline.

Interventions

- Educational handouts are given to patients upon admission to the unit.
- Reinforcement of the risk for functional decline and use of the Day Room was incorporated into the nurse manager and nurse practitioner's daily rounds.
- A daily schedule was developed for activities. PCTs were assigned to lead a daily activity, rotating staff members for each workday. Activities were selected based on patient feedback. Activities include adult coloring, jigsaw puzzles, card games, board games and crafts.
- Pet therapy is offered daily in the Day Room.
- A weekly movie night for patients and family members is offered one evening per week.

Outcomes

- Patient participation activities will be measured daily.
- Employee surveys will be evaluated to determine whether satisfaction is increased.
- Admission to extended care facilities will be tracked monthly.
- Ongoing feedback from patients will be collected to improve the planning and implementation of Day Room activities.

References

Available for review from presenter

