Confusion Assessment Method

Discussion and Future Direction

After educating staff and assessing how the CAM was being used it was apparent that further intervention and additional education were needed. After just a short trial it was evident that many cases of delirium were not being identified necessitating further insight into how use of this evidence-based tool could be used more consistently. Further staff in-services, PowerPoint presentations and monitoring have increased the use of this evidence-based instrument.

Next steps include data analysis to determine the actual number of delirium cases identified using ICD-9 codes and by consistent use of the CAM. With earlier recognition and management of delirium, a decrease in re-iter usage, hospital length of stay, and fall rates is expected. Ultimately, improvement in patient and family satisfaction, quality of care, and financial outcomes are the goals.

References


Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders. Retrieved from http://nicheprogram.indiana.edu/nicheprogram


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Are You Confused about Delirium?

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Delirium, a pathological condition of cognitive impairment, has significant consequences for older adults, their families, and the healthcare system. According to the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing, recognition of high-risk patients and implementation of evidence-based protocols can detect early signs of delirium and improve outcomes.

With early detection, protocols can be implemented to prevent and treat delirium, slow the progression of decline with dementia, and treat depression. Without systematic assessment, healthcare providers report greater frustration and job stress in caring for these individuals and the cost of providing care is much greater. Because of our large population of patients age 65 and older that are admitted each year, a large hospital system in the southwestern United States, identified the need for an assessment tool to detect patients at risk for delirium.

The purpose of this practice innovation was to select and implement an evidence-based approach for identification and management of patients at high-risk for delirium, slow the progression of decline with dementia, and treat depression. Without systematic assessment, healthcare providers report greater frustration and job stress in caring for these individuals and the cost of providing care is much greater. Because of our large population of patients age 65 and older that are admitted each year, a large hospital system in the southwestern United States, identified the need for an assessment tool to detect patients at risk for delirium.

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