

Nurses' perceptions of the practice of patient rounding

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Objective: Using the newly developed instrument, the nurse's perception of patient rounding scale (NPPRS), the objective of this research was to explore staff nurses' perceptions towards the practice of patient rounding to gain knowledge regarding perceived benefits, values, and factors supporting or inhibiting rounding practices. An additional objective was to include statistical support to provide further development and validation of the NPPRS

Background: Historically, the practice of routine ward rounds has traditionally been a standard practice in both medicines in nursing. Rounding has re-emerged as a standard practice initiative among nurses in hospitals to promote safe quality care in health care delivery systems. Patient's perception of excellence in care is based on the perceived availability and visible presence of nurses. The practice of patient rounding has been associated with a decrease in call light use and falls, increased patient satisfaction and safety, and quieter nursing units. While the conduct of patient rounding in hospital settings is increasingly becoming standard practice, continued controversy regarding its use in nursing exists. Due to a dearth in evaluation to determine staff nurses' perceived values, beliefs, and attitudes towards the practice of rounding, the NPPRS was developed.

Methods: The NPPRS, a 42 item scale in 5 point Likert format was developed to gain an understanding of nurses' perceptions of rounding with psychometric support obtained. After IRB approval, participants completed the anonymous survey with additional qualitative items geared toward identifying challenges, barriers, and facilitators towards this increasingly mandatory practice.

Results: Findings revealed that nurses perceived rounding to be of benefit to patients, but statistically significantly less beneficial for nurse benefits. Qualitative inquiry identified rounding as valuable, although nurses reported that a mandated rounding protocol minimized their sense of professional autonomy and self-directed practice. Additional research findings regarding challenges to practice and implications for further research and practice are discussed.

Conclusion: Findings support the need/desire for nurses to engage in greater shared governance in which staff nurses drive decision-making in patient care.

Biography

Kathleen Neville is a Professor in the School of Nursing at Kean University, Union; New Jersey. She has numerous publications in peer refereed journals, book chapters and published a textbook in adolescent oncology nursing. She has been the recipient of numerous awards for Distinguished Faculty Service and Scholarship for her own research activities and for mentoring undergraduate/graduate nursing students and nurses in practice in the pursuit of research. She is the former editor of the Research Connection, a publication of New Jersey Commission of Cancer Research, and is a research reviewer for several refereed nursing journals and conferences.

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