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The effectiveness of using a systematic assessment tool for hospital discharge planning

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Background: Discharge-planning services are aimed to meet the post discharge care requirements of patients. Thus, an effective method for assessing their care requirements is critical.

Objective: This study was to explore the effectiveness of using a systematic assessment tool for hospital discharge planning.

Methods: This research adopted a longitudinal two-group comparison study design, and a convenience sampling method was adopted to recruit patients requiring discharge-planning services at 8 wards in a regional teaching hospital in Southern Taiwan. The post discharge care requirements of the patients were evaluated using a traditional assessment tool or a systematic assessment tool as an alternative. 68 patients were matched with similar age and with similar activity in daily living index scores to compare the effectiveness of the tools.

Results: The systematic assessment tool exhibited significantly higher assessment integrity and lower rates of re-hospitalization and mortality within discharge of 14 days. The two groups exhibited no significant difference in inappropriate hospital days, and primary decision-makers' satisfaction. However, the differences in 3 items of satisfaction exhibited moderate-to-large effect sizes, which may be of clinical importance.

Conclusions: To meet the needs of primary decision-makers in a family, enhance their satisfaction, and provide effective discharge-planning services, clinicians should adopt the systematic assessment tool to assess the post discharge care requirements of patient, and the hospital should provide relevant facilities to assist in implementing all plans.

Biography

Huey-Shyan Lin is an Associate Professor of Department of Health-Business Administration, School of Nursing at Fooyin University in Taiwan. She received her PhD in Health Services Policy and Management from University of South Carolina, USA. She now serves as a Consultant of Research and Development, Department of Health, Kaohsiung City Government, and research consultant of several hospitals, Taiwan, R.O.C. She also possesses a good publication record in nurse depression, stress management, health promotion, instrument development, and clinical medicine. Her biography was included in Who's Who in the World 2014-2016, and Who's Who in Science and Engineering® 2016-2017.

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