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Missed nursing care, patient outcomes and care outcomes in selected hospitals in Southern Nigeria

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Background: Nurse Shortages cause omission of less critical nursing tasks by nurses.

Aim: To examine the nature and prevalence of missed care; and assess relationship between missed care and selected care outcomes.

Methods: Mixed method was used (descriptive and intervention) in this study. 186 nurses providing direct adult care in 4 hospitals, and 120 patients were enrolled. Ethical clearance was obtained from the HREC of Cross River State Ministry of Health. Nurses identified activities omitted in part or whole, or delayed in the previous seven days from a validated list of required care activities. Intervention comprised capacity building on certain care issues. Data were collected through researcher-developed and validated questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse data on SPSS 18.0.

Results: Most nurses (83.9%) reported they had left one or more care activities undone. At post-test experimental group mean reduced significantly. Care most missed were routine bath (34.9%), spiritual support (33.9%), assessing effectiveness of pain medication (28.0%), patient education (26.3%), pain assessment before administering medication (25.8%), etc. Others like chronic wound care and updating care plans were delayed but not totally missed. After intervention both prevalence and overall Means of missed care for experimental group reduced significantly ($p=0.001$). Missed care was significantly related to all outcomes. Higher mean scores on missed care related with poor rating of outcomes, while lower means related with good outcomes. Study did not consider staffing levels.

Conclusion: Nurses reported frequently leaving “non-critical” care activities undone. Closer supervision is required to reduce missed care in staff.

Biography

Mary Ach Mgbekem has completed her PhD (Human Nutrition) from University of Calabar and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) from Walden University School of Nursing. She is the Ag Head of Department of Nursing Science, one of the Universities in the South-South Geo-political Zones offering Nursing and Midwifery education for undergraduate and postgraduate students. She has published more than 20 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as a faculty board and N & MCN member of the repute.

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