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Nurse survey on venous thromboembolism (VTE): Knowledge and perception

Sue Stewart

Charles Darwin University, Australia

A major problem identified in orthopedic patients is venous thromboembolism (VTE). VTE is the collective name that describes two clinical conditions: deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE). The incidence of VTE remains a global problem and in Australia it is responsible for 10% of all hospital deaths. There have been multiple studies on how health professionals can assist in risk assessment and VTE prevention with nurses playing a major role in VTE reduction. This includes nurses having the ability and knowledge to conduct accurate clinical assessments and assisting in the identification of patients at high risk for VTE and/or patients exhibiting signs and symptoms of VTE. To achieve this, nurses require thorough knowledge of what VTE is, how it develops and how they can contribute to VTE risk assessment and prophylaxis to improve patient outcomes. We are all aware of VTE risk assessment and prophylaxis however, not all prevention guidelines and protocols have been well established or embedded into routine clinical practice. The cornerstone of nursing practice, including patient assessment is to achieve optimum patient outcomes. Having knowledge and well developed assessment skills can assist in the recognition of a change in a patient's health status or to identify a risk factor for VTE that could protect the patient from an avoidable adverse event.

Biography

Sue Stewart is a Lecturer in Nursing at Charles Darwin University, Melbourne Campus, Victoria, Australia teaching both undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Nursing and Post Graduate students within the clinical specialization of Orthopedic Nursing. She completed her Master's degree (Orthopedics) in 2004 and currently, she is a PhD candidate with Federation University. She is the President-elect of the Australian and New Zealand Orthopedic Nurses Association (ANZONA) and a Member of the Victorian Association of Orthopedic Nurses.

sue.stewart@cdu.edu.au

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