



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Evidence-based Practice(EBP): An Oral Care Enhancement Program in Nasogastric tube feeding patients in Acute Medicine and Geriatric units

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Introduction

Oral care is not only a basic human need preserving dignity, there is also overwhelming evidence to support good oral care can reduce risk of aspiration pneumonia. In United Christian Hospital, provision of mouth care for nasogastric(NG) tube feeding patients is using cotton stick soaked with drinking water without convincing evidence. Moreover, there is a great variance in quality of mouth care delivery as it largely depends on nurse's perception and knowledge. To achieve better patient outcomes and promote nursing professionalism in this aspect, an EBP oral care enhancement program was launched.

Objectives

- 1.Enhance oral health of patients with NG tube
- 2.Arouse nurses' awareness and strengthen their knowledge on oral hygiene
- 3.Increase caregivers' satisfaction

Methodology

A departmental EBP workgroup was established followed by quarterly meeting since 2015. The Practice Question-Evidence-Translation(PET)model was adopted to guide the practice change.

1.Practice Question 1.1An EBP question 'Is boiled-water better than chlorhexidine solution used for mouth care on patients with NG tube feeding in hospital?' was formulated.

2.Evidence

2.1Literatures search, review and critical appraisal were performed.

2.2Results supported the use of chlorhexidine and toothbrush for mouth care but a paucity of study focused on patients with NG tube.

2.3Evidence-based oral care protocol was developed.

3.Translation

- 3.1 A 2-month pilot oral care enhancement program was implemented in two acute medical units in 2017.
- 3.2 Concise briefing was provided to nurses prior to practice change.
- 3.3 Two questionnaires were designed and validated to evaluate satisfaction rate from caregivers and feedbacks from nurses.
- 3.4 Outcomes were evaluated by workgroup.

Result

29 patients with mean-aged 83.4 were recruited. 100% of nurses and caregivers responded oral hygiene had improved with no adverse effects. 100% of caregivers were contented with the new practice as they agreed this could enable delivering of compassionate care. 100% of nurses complied with new protocol. Over 90% agreed they have increased knowledge and awareness on oral health. Although 70% of nurses thought that the new oral care method was time-consuming, nobody was reluctant to support the enhancement program. Barriers and difficulties were also explored to prepare for rollout in other wards.