Service Priorities and Programmes

Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 681
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Educational Strategy in Neurological Status Observation and Measurement: Improving clinical competency and practice for nurses in Acute Stroke Unit

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Keywords:
Neurological Obervation
Glasgow Coma Scale
Nurse

Introduction

Nurses play a crucial role in the early detection of patient's neurological status and they are in a prime position to alert potentially critical deterioration in the patient's condition. The Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) was first developed in 1974 by Teasdale and Jennett and it is one of the most effective and reliable tools to assess the level of consciousness of patient with neurological deficit. It enhanced communication between health professionals by application of common reporting language with its simple components. GCS is also widely used in Hong Kong as well as our Acute Stroke Unit (ASU). Nurses generally receive simple introduction of the assessment tool from nursing schools and experienced nurses in clinical settings. There is no well-structured education on neurological observation and measurement in our unit. Variations in practice and skill level of nursing staff lead to inconsistencies of application and may deteriorate patients' outcome. Therefore a systematic educational strategy in neurological status observation and measurement for nurses is developed in ASU of our hospital to contain accuracy of assessment and improve the quality of nursing care.

Objectives

☐ To benchmark and strengthen nursing knowledge and skills in neurological observation ☐ To enhance accuracy, consistency and safety in monitoring and recording patient' s neurological status.

Methodology

A Kaizen Project of "Clinical Competency Assessment on Neurological Status Observation and Measurement" including practical training for nurses was implemented in ASU. Working group by well-trained nurses in Stroke Specialty was developed to design and formulate the education program. Ongoing performance

monitoring was conducted by regular review of its limitation and reevaluation of learning progress.

Result

This project highlights the vital role of nurses in ensuring complete practice of neurological observation in ASU. It demonstrates significant improvement in the accuracy and consistency of neurological measurement. Nurses evaluate progress towards enhancing self-confidence, competency and effectiveness in performing neurological assessment.