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Nurses' Views on Incorporating Mindfulness in the Acute Care Setting

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Project Overview

Goal: To gain a better understanding of nurses' perspectives on incorporating mindfulness for patients in the acute care setting

Main Points: For my project, I wanted to survey nurses working on a medical-surgical unit at The Miriam Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island. The survey consisted of nine statements asking about their thoughts on mindfulness. Almost all of the nurses had strongly agreed that mindfulness would be helpful in reducing stress for acute patients (4.28). It is interesting to note that although the nurses thought it would be beneficial, their average score regarding whether or not they had spoken to other staff members about it was very low (2.28). Based on the average score for these two statements, it appears that nurses are aware of the practice but they are not speaking to other staff members about it. This may be due to a lack of awareness within the organization (The Miriam Hospital) regarding mindfulness. Within the hospital the nurses do have an employee benefit program called Working Healthy in which coordinators hold events such as sponsored runs every month, massages, and counseling services as well as health screenings for employees. There are also staff RN's who are able to hold yoga sessions for employees interested in participating. With the Working Healthy program being well advertised throughout the organization, it is an opportune time to have providers talking about mindfulness practice. However, this has not happened. This leads into the next statement pertaining to nurses being interested in facilitating a deep breathing exercise with their patients if they were asked. This was the highest average score (4.57). This score was a lot higher than the statement about simply handing patient's a pamphlet about mindfulness (3.85). The difference between these two scores is very informative. Instead of handing someone an informational brochure about mindfulness practice, the nurses seem to be more interested in how to actually practice an exercise with patients upon request. By teaching the nurses how to perform a mindfulness exercise that lasts one-two minutes, it may have a significant effect on patients' quality of care and overall health. More education on mindfulness as a treatment option may facilitate better inclusion of it within the acute care facilities.