

Development of a Bereavement Program in the Intensive Care Unit: Helping Provide Nurses with Meaningful Closure Following the Death of a Patient

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Development of a Bereavement Program in the Intensive Care Unit: Helping Provide Nurses with Meaningful Closure Following the Death of a Patient

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Background

- An opportunity was identified to provide registered nurses with interventions that would assist them with achieving closure when a patient death occurs.

Purpose

- To develop a bereavement program in the intensive care unit to help nurses gain meaningful closure following the death of a patient. Closure for the nurse is a comforting sense of resolution following a death.

Literature Review

- Staff members gained greater job satisfaction in helping families grieve (Williams, Harris, Randall, Nichols & Brown, 2003).
- Both nurses and families found benefit from a bereavement program (Gibson, Finney & Boilanger, 2011).
- Families depend on nurses to assist them during end-of-life activities; nurses should develop skills that allow them to assist the family in understanding all of the information presented to them and explain what to expect in the dying process (Kirchhoff, Walker, Hutton, Spuhler, Vaughn Cole & Clemmer, 2002).

Methods

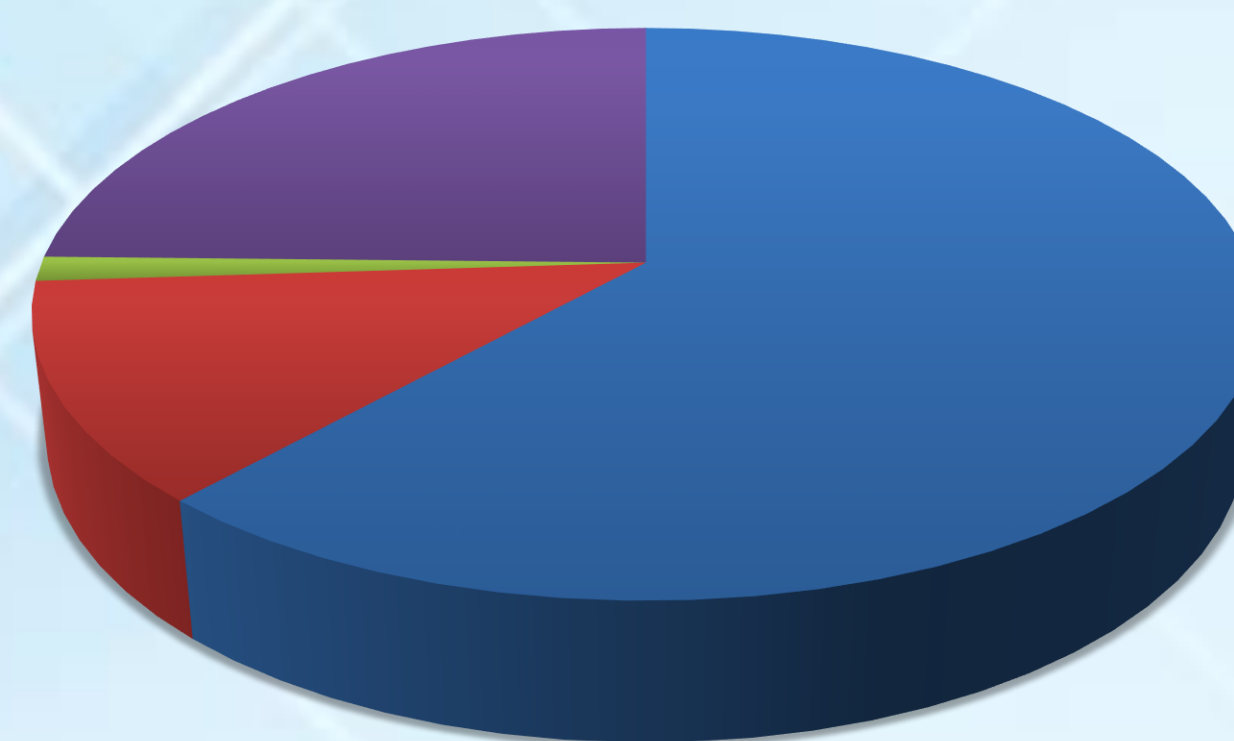
- Pre-survey sent to all nurses in the Intensive Care Unit – Muhlenberg
- Implementation of finger molds and forget-me-not seeds for families of patients that have died.



- Post survey for nurses that have provided care for patients at the end-of-life.

Results

Utilization of Interventions

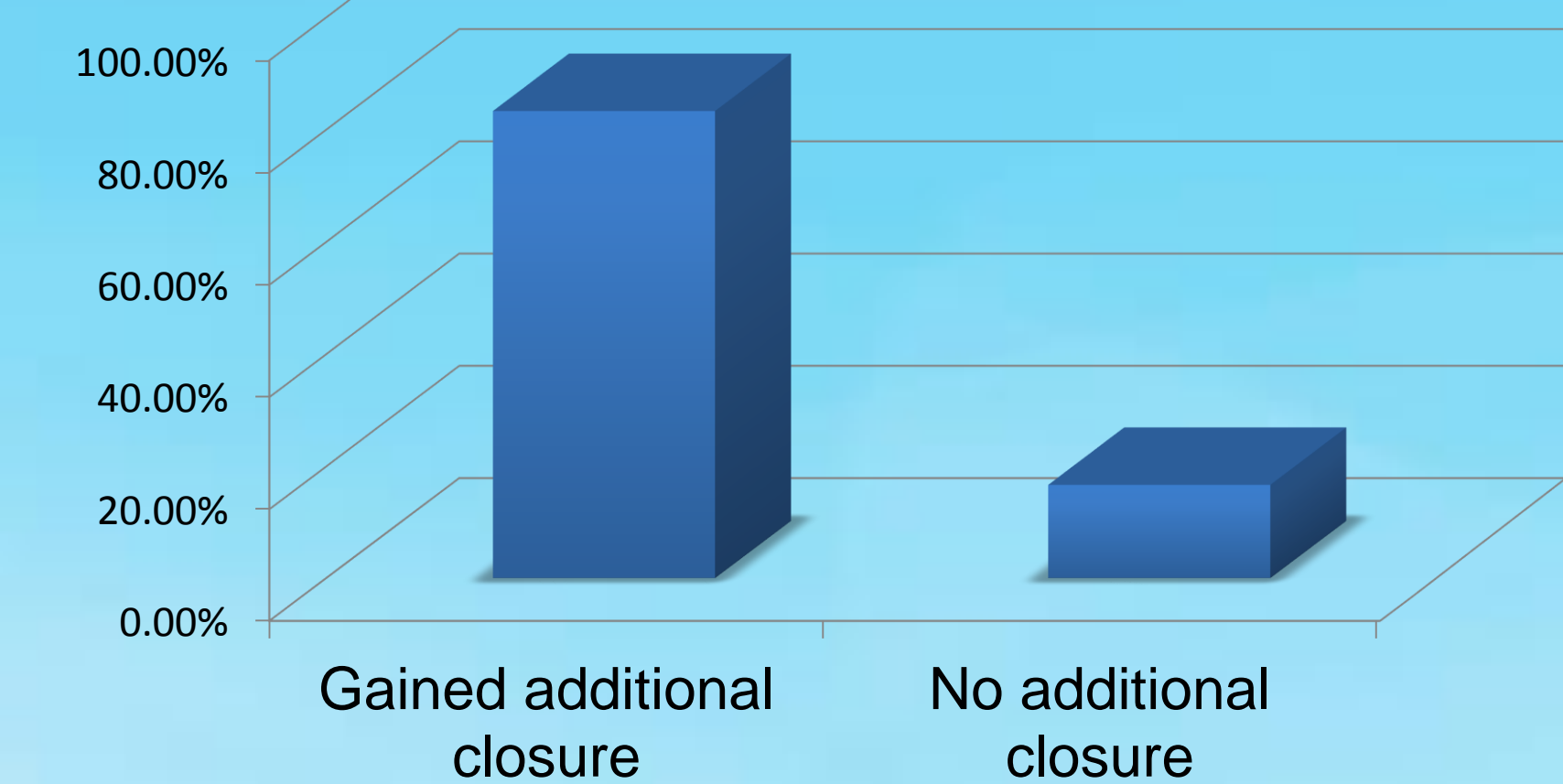


- Use of finger molds
- Use of flower seeds
- Use of both
- Did not use

- Most nurses utilized the bereavement interventions, although most only utilized one.
- Those that did not use the interventions did not feel comfortable approaching the family.

Results

Effectiveness of Interventions on Meaningful Closure for Nurses



Outcomes

- 80% of nurses that had the opportunity to utilize the interventions experienced an increase in meaningful closure following the death of their patient.

Conclusion

- Providing a bereavement program at the ICU-M has proved to increase closure among the nurses.
- Moving forward, the bereavement program could be introduced.

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