Nurses’ Knowledge and Attitude Regarding Pain Assessment and Interventions in Nursing Home Residents: Evaluation of a Pain Management Program.

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Introduction

Chronic pain is a major medical issue among elderly nursing home residents and is often underdiagnosed and inadequately treated. When nurses have inadequate knowledge, pain will be assessed inaccurately. Nurses’ knowledge and efficiency to accurately assess pain & provide appropriate interventions on time is critical to achieve effective pain management.

Background & Significance

The incidence of pain doubles once individuals surpass the age of 60 (American Geriatric Society, 2002). 25-50% of the older adults living in community-based settings suffer from pain. Pain among the elderly it is often ignored and under treated by healthcare providers. Negative attitude among nurses can lead to poor pain management in the elderly (McLafferty & Farley, 2008).

People living in long-term care facilities have shown to have rates of untreated pain ranging from 45% to 83% (Ferrel, Ferrel & Osterweil, 1990). Adequate pain management will lead to persistent pain and it in turn will affect the quality of life among the elderly (Heer et al., 2010).

Though pain assessments were shown in 85% of the medical records, weekly pain assessment documentation was only 32% (Jablonski & Ersek, 2009). Pain management continued to be a nursing challenge due to the lack of knowledge in pain documentation (Voshall, Dunn, & Shelseth, 2013).

There is a positive relationship between nurses’ knowledge of pain assessment and the intention to implement pain assessment (Natan, Ataneli,Ademko, & Noy, 2013). There was a 40% rise in the consistency between nurse documentation and patient report of pain (Shriever et al, 2014).

A brief educational session on pain management is an efficient way to improve nurses’ knowledge and attitude toward pain assessment and treatment (Koen et al 2017).

Methodology

A survey developed to collect demographic data, the Knowledge and Attitudes Survey Regarding Pain (KASRP) was conducted. A well structured pain education program helps to increase nurses’ knowledge and attitude.

Theoretical framework

The Knowledge and Attitudes Survey Regarding Pain (KASRP) is a survey developed to collect demographic data, a chart audit checklist, and Shapiro-Wilk’s test of normality.

Objectives

• Educate nurses about pain management and measure nurses’ knowledge; and attitude pre- and post-educational training to determine knowledge retention.

• Educate nurses about documentation of pain assessment and treatment and measure nurses’ chart documentation pre and post educational training to determine if there was a change in practice.

To investigate the relationship between demographics, experience descriptors and education of registered nurses and licensed practical nurses, and their knowledge and attitude about pain management.

Literature review

• Pain is one of the most reported symptoms among older people (Monroe et al., 2013).

• Pain scores were inaccurately documented and follow up assessments were missing (Monroe et al., 2013).

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