A Family Inclusive Approach to Bedside Handover in a Children's Intensive Care Unit

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Background:
Parents/carers of children who are admitted to Children’s Intensive care units (CICU) endure high levels of stress and anxiety due to the uncertainty of outcomes, unfamiliar clinical environment, loss of control and diminished parental responsibility (Seideman et al., 1997). Family-centred care (FCC) and parent/carer education has been shown to reduce stress in families of children admitted to CICU (Colville et al., 2009, Seideman et al., 1997).

CICU staff identified that parents/carers were unaware of the importance and process of a clinical nursing handover or how parents could contribute effectively during handover time. Nursing handover provides an opportunity to engage and empower families in the care of their child and extend the practice of FCC.

Aims:
This project aimed to develop, implement and evaluate the use of written information to:
• Improve families knowledge of what nursing handover entails.
• Enable family engagement in nursing handover.

Results:
• A written information leaflet was developed (Diagram 1) and implemented.
• 43 families agreed to participate in the questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of the written information during 2015 (n=19) and 2016 (n=21).
• Written information was found to improve parent/carers knowledge, and understanding of clinical nursing handover in all (n=19), 100% and 87.5% (n=21) of CICU families in 2015 and 2016 respectively.
• The majority of participating families reported that the information was easy to understand (n=24, 95.8% versus n=23, 95%) and that they were able to contribute at the end of nursing handover.
• The written information reportedly met the learning needs of more parents in 2016 (n=21, 87.5%) compared to the previous year (n=13, 68.4%).

Method:
Staff developed a written information leaflet to explain clinical nursing handover and to establish a dedicated time for parents and carers to participate.

Families of children admitted to CICU were asked to evaluate the information provided in the written information leaflet through the use of a SurveyMonkey Questionnaire.

Questions sought to ascertain if the content in the leaflet was informative, easy to understand and enabled families to participate and contribute in the handover process. The data was then analysed and results interpreted.

Outcome:
Our EOC project demonstrated how parent/carer engagement can be fostered. The written information leaflet increased families knowledge of nursing handover, and ensured that they had a dedicated time to communicate their concerns or observations during clinical nursing handover at the bedside.

References:

Diagram 1: EOC Handover Tool

Comments from Parents/carers:
Parents/carers described feeling included in handover.
It was recommended that all nurses offer the leaflet on admission to ensure that families receive the information as soon as possible.