Abstract

RESEARCH SUBJECT: Ventilator Associated Pneumonia: Education and Prevention

STUDENTS: Meghan L. Crockett BSN, RN, CMSRN

DEGREE: Masters of Science in Nursing

COLLEGE: College of Applied Sciences and Technology

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Critically ill patients experiencing a life-threatening illness often contract ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP). Subsequent aspiration of contaminated secretions along with colonization of the aerodigestive tract increases morbidity and mortality. As a result, there is an increased cost of health care that accounts for almost half of all infections in critically ill patients, increasing length of stay in the ICU. The purpose of this observational study is to determine whether an educational initiative decreases rates of VAP in ICU. This study is a replication of Babcock et al. (2004) study. The Guidelines for Prevailing Health-Care Associated Pneumonia (CDC) is the framework. A VAP educational program will be conducted for ICU nurses and respiratory therapists emphasizing correct practices for the prevention of VAP. The study will be conducted in two community-based hospitals in southern Indiana. Forty ICU nurses and twenty respiratory therapists will be offered a structured self-study module on risk factors for and strategies to prevent VAP. Ventilator-associated pneumonia rates will be monitored for six months. Findings will provide evidence for educational programs to help reduce VAP and reduce length of stay in ICU. The evidence will provide ways on how to reduce VAP with inadequate staffing and limited resources through continuing education.