

Abstract

RESEARCH PAPER: Oral Care Practices and Interventions for Prevention of Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia

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Mechanical ventilation is a life-saving measure utilized when the respiratory status of a critically ill patient has become compromised. Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP) is a complication of mechanical ventilation (Cutler & Davis, 2005). The purpose of this study is to identify current practices of oral care in patients receiving mechanical ventilation and measure compliance with an intervention of standardized oral care. The organizing framework is the Guidelines for Prevailing Health-Care Associated Pneumonia (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). The sample will include 250 mechanically ventilated patients in a Medical and Surgical Intensive Care Unit with 21 beds at a local community hospital in the State of Indiana. Inclusion criteria are individuals over 18 year old and requiring mechanical ventilation for longer than 48 hours. Time blocks of 8 hours will be randomized over the intensive care units to observe oral care on all intubated patients. Observational baseline data on oral care practices will be collected before implementation of the education program and compared to post-interventional data.

Identification of current practices will occur through an oral care survey and direct observation. During the intervention phase, compliance of the protocol will be monitored and compared to pre-protocol practices. Findings will provide information regarding oral care practices among nurses and if such practices reduce the incidence of Ventilator Associated Pneumonia.

