Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy in the Intensive Care Unit: Launch of a Program
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Problem: Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy (CRRT) for patients in the Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) Critical Care Units was primarily provided through the inter-facility loan of CRRT trained nurses, from the co-located Institute of Surgical Research (ISR) Burn Intensive Care Unit (BICU).

Evidence: The utilization of CRRT is controversial and not a universally accepted treatment modality. Early initiation of therapies such as CRRT in select patients has been suggested to be beneficial.

Strategy: Working with the assistance of the ISR CRRT team to implement this program at BAMC, training materials as well as policies and procedures were updated and revised to develop the CRRT program for the BAMC ICU patients.

Practice Change: The patients in the BAMC ICUs would be provided CRRT jointly by the BAMC ICU and hemodialysis staff.

Evaluation: The initial training for the ICU nursing staff was composed of a two day course; day one had four (4) hours of didactic instruction, followed by a 3 hour question and answer session related to the program, a review of the electronic charting, and program responsibilities. The second day, NxStage company vendors provided 4 hours of machine basics and a review of CRRT. The initial group of staff were labeled “Super-Users”, understanding that they were to help facilitate the initiation of this program in the ICU, as well as assist in future staff training. The hemodialysis unit training involved 4 hours of hands on machinery training.

Results: We successfully initiated a new CRRT program at our facility.

Recommendation: A successful CRRT program can be established from beginning to end, within a 6 month time period.

Lessons Learned: Implementation of a new CRRT Program in a relatively CRRT novice ICU can be very daunting at times. The incorporation of dialysis staff into the nursing care team activities provided its own challenges. However, with focused attention on teamwork and excellent administrative support, BAMC has successfully initiated a CRRT program in our ICUs.

Bibliography:

