Value of Oral Care in the Reduction of VAP in Burn ICU Patients
Amy B. Bray, RN, BSN, CCRN
U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR)
Kylee Foy, Mayra Castillo, Ellen J. Angelo

Problem:
Lack of oral care compliance may contribute to an increased ventilator associated pneumonia (VAP) rates in the intubated burned population.

Evidence:
Our VAP rate from January 2009 to June 2009 was 23% in comparison to the national average of 12%. Per unit policy ventilated patients are required to have two nurse initiated orders (NIO) activated, ‘Swab Oral Cavity Q4 Hours’ and ‘Brush Teeth BID’ within 24 hours of intubation. An automated query of computerized documentation resulted in a compliance rate of 22%.

Strategy:
A review of the literature shows a positive correlation between the frequency of oral care and the incidents of VAP. Working with a multidisciplinary team, a formal performance improvement project using the FOCUS PDCA format was developed and implemented.

Practice Change:
A massive staff education campaign was launched July 2009 using oral care kit representatives to reinforce the importance of oral care, use of their oral care kit and introduction of an update policy. The campaign included education with a unit appropriate oral care kit. Along with the education came increased staff accountability though positive leadership and more frequent audits. The last practice change was a redefined admission order set of NIO’s.

Evaluation:
Random weekly visual audits of kits usage was conducted along with monthly automated queries of the computerized charting.

Results:
With the use of an enforceable policy, less complicated means of accessing the correct NIO’s and education have proven to be very effective. In three months oral compliance increased from 22% to 98%. During the same time period our VAP rate decreased from 23% to 7%.

Recommendation:
Education, positive management reinforcement and an affable documentation system will lead to staff compliance to meet organizational goals. With the new/ reinforced knowledge came heightened awareness from the increased accountability of the project coordinators. When staff is provided with an oral care kit to match the current policy and information on its use their compliance increases.
Bibliography:


