Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP) and the Research Process
Nanette Brokaw, BSN, RN
UT Health Science Center San Antonio

Problem
- The VAP rate was perceived as problem in the TICU in a level one trauma center. It was suggested that we use Chlorhexidine impregnated cloths to decrease our perceived elevated rate of VAP. A project was undertaken by a graduate student to validate VAP rates and the need for alternative prevention methods.

Evidence
- The Joint Commission sets patient safety goals to include the reduction of the risk of health care–associated infections. VAP is the most common complication in patients in an ICU setting and accounts for 47% of all infections causing an increase in morbidity and mortality. AACN recommends elevated HOB, hand-hygiene, oral care, education, and use of gloves. Chlorhexidine impregnated wipes have been shown to decrease hospital acquired infections and VAP rates.

Strategy
- We began by ascertaining baseline levels by using the trauma registry data of trauma patients and VAP diagnosis. These levels would then be used to validate the perception of increased VAP rates in this setting.

Practice Change
- None required.

Evaluation
- We found that VAP was actually not a problem in the TICU. The current interventions in place have been successful in decreasing VAP and no changes are needed.

Results
- This project resulted in a deeper understanding of the research process and the importance of validating that a problem actually exists before planning and intervention.

Recommendations
- Recommendations include improving one’s familiarity with the research process prior to undertaking a project such as always obtaining baseline data. It is also recommended to find a mentor to assist with the process.

Lessons Learned
- Beginning a research project takes time and patience along with an understanding of the research process.

Bibliography


