“Pain Assessment and Management in Elderly Patients with Severe Mental Illness who Develops Dementia”

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ABSTRACT

Problem/Rationale: The prevalence of chronic pain ranges from 40% - 80% in the elderly with the highest proportion found among patients with dementia. Unfortunately, pain in older adults, particularly, those with dementia, is under diagnosed and undertreated. In part the difficulty in accurate assessment is linked to inadequate pain assessment instruments that have not been validated in an elderly population. An even more difficult to assess group are participants with a duel diagnosis of chronic mental illness and dementia. Literature from the late 1990’s suggests that comorbidity of cognitive impairments due to dementia with schizophrenia was evident for 60% of schizophrenia patients who were chronically institutionalized. Literature reported researched focused on pain assessment issues for patients with severe mental illness who are now living with dementia is sparse. Clinical observations provide an estimate of 3 – 5% of elderly patients who are admitted to a hospital geriatric unit having a history of severe mental illness and subsequent development of dementia. A uniform observation pain measurement tool/scale would be helpful for use with this population to provide optimum quality care.

Research questions:
Qualitative: What is the reported and observed pain experience of patients who are living with dementia and severe mental illness?
Quantitative: What is the level of participation in patient activities and the pattern of pain medication administration for hospitalized dual diagnosis patients?

Project Overview and Patient/Stakeholder Engagement: Elderly patients with a dual diagnosis who are admitted to a hospital geriatric unit and their family member or other caretaker will be interviewed about their pain experience.

Research Design: A concurrent exploratory mixed method design that includes data collection over 30 days. Interviews and observations will occur in the in-patient setting. Record review will provide the information about activity level and pain medication administration.

No handouts were provided for this presentation:

Notes: