

RNF

Nurse Staffing and Patient Outcomes in the Rehabilitation Setting

Abstract Form

In 250 to 350 words define the research, state the significance of the research, the research methodology, and plan for analysis. **DO NOT USE A SEPARATE SHEET.**

The 2006 report Nurse Staffing and Quality of Patient Care by the agency for Healthcare Quality and Research cited inadequate nurse staffing and heavy workloads threaten healthcare quality and safety (Clarke and Donaldson). While significant work has been done on nurse staffing and outcomes on medical and surgical units, few researchers have looked at nurse staffing on specialty units.

Rehabilitation nurses provide care that assists individuals with physical disability and/or chronic illness to attain health, restore function and promote recovery. In 2007 Nelson et al. investigated the relationship of nurse staffing and patient outcomes in the rehabilitation setting. In this study the patient outcome of interest was improvement in physical function as measured by the Functional Independence Measure (FIM). FIM gain, that is the change in scores from admission to discharge, is a measure of efficiency of rehabilitation care. While it is valuable for assessing patient's functional improvement across time, it reflects the contributions of the rehabilitation team. We propose to build on this work and look more specifically at staffing in relation to nursing-sensitive outcomes.

To evaluate the impact of nurse staffing in relationship to outcomes we propose to look at the relationship of nurse staffing characteristics (hours per patient care day- HPPD, skill mix, certification and nurse educational levels), work environment (facility ownership, Magnet status, nurse satisfaction) in relation to nursing-sensitive outcomes (fall rate, hospital acquired pressure ulcers, and catheter associated urinary tract infections (CAUTI)) on adult rehabilitation units as reported by the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators (NDNQI[®]).

Specific Aims:

- To describe current nurse staffing patterns on adult rehabilitation units that participate in NDNQI[®].
- To examine differences in patient outcomes between adult rehabilitation units in Magnet facilities and non-Magnet facilities.
- To determine the relationship between nurse staffing characteristics (including HPPD, skill mix, use of agency staff, education, specialty certification) and patient outcomes (fall rates, fall rates with injuries, hospital acquired Stage 2 pressure ulcers, and CAUTI rates) on adult rehabilitation units.
- To explore the relationship between nurse job satisfaction and patient outcomes on adult rehabilitation units.