A comparison of the quality of nursing care between pre- and postimplementing of a clinical pathway

Hsu Nanly PhD RN  
Professor, Director of School of Nursing, Tzu Chi University; Nursing Consultant, Buddhist Tzu Chi General Hospital, Hualien, Taiwan

Brian T.-H. Chen PhD  
Professor, China Institute of Technology, Taipei, Taiwan

Lay-lan Lee RN  
Master Student, School of Nursing, Tzu Chi University, Hualien, Taiwan

Min-huey Chung MSN  
Doctoral Student, Tzu Chi University; Instructor, School of Nursing, National Defense University, Taipei, Taiwan

Pi-chu Lin PhD RN  
Supervisor, Taipei Veterans General Hospital, Taipei, Taiwan

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Introduction
The association between clinical pathway and the quality of nursing care has been well reported in the literature (e.g. Wigfield & Boon 1996), but there was a lack of studies on how to evaluate and compare the quality of nursing care pre- and postimplementing clinical pathway.

Aim
To evaluate the quality of nursing care on four types of patients and compare the quality of nursing care with four objectives pre- and postimplementing the clinical pathway.

Methodology
Design
This was a quasi-experimental design.

Sampling
Patients from four orthopaedic units in the TVGH at Taipei were randomly selected. A pretest and post-test (after three months) were conducted. Sample sizes pre- and post-implementing clinical pathways were type I and type II 55 each, type III 38, type IV 0, and total 296 patients.

Data collection and procedure
Eight questionnaires, which were developed from Hsu (1989, 1995) quality monitoring tool (A and B questionnaires for four types of patients), were randomly selected to monitor orthopaedic nursing care quality in pre- and post-test. Eight questionnaires that included 50 criteria in each questionnaire were developed to assure the quality of nursing care. Data collection methods for the quality tools were: (1) information from the patient’s record; (2) observation of the patient; (3) interview with the patient; (4) interview with the nurse; (5) observation of the nurse; (6) observation of the patient’s environment, and (7) observer’s inference. Each criterion had designated methods for its data collection. Observers classified the randomly selected patients and then appropriate questionnaires were sequentially selected. The observer reviewed the patient’s chart and completed patients’
demographic data on the questionnaire, then started data collection. Data collection procedures adhere to the ethical protection for the study participants. The reliability was tested on inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. Content validity was based on the opinions of the experts.

Scoring

There were three methods that could be used to assign the score for the criteria depending upon the type of response. The mean score for an objective was calculated with the sum of each sub-objective score multiplied by the number of the criteria divided by the total number of each sub-objective criterion.

Data analysis

Data were analysed by means, standard deviation, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe’ test.

Results

There were no significant differences in the quality of nursing care between pre- and postclinical pathway implemented, also no significant differences among three types of patients with four objectives (Table 1).

Conclusion

This study:
(1) develops the orthopaedic nursing care quality monitoring tools, (2) the use of this tool to evaluate the quality of nursing care will assist administrators and educators to identify the strengths and weakness in the delivery of nursing care.

References


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**Table 1** The **ANOVA** of quality of nursing care on four objectives and three types of patients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: The plan of nursing care is formulated</td>
<td>Type I</td>
<td>89.77</td>
<td>41.73</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.86</td>
<td>1.36</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Type II</td>
<td>93.17</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Type III</td>
<td>93.44</td>
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<td>II: The physical needs of the patient are attended</td>
<td>Type I</td>
<td>88.84</td>
<td>131.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65.50</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.30</td>
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<td>Type II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Type III</td>
<td>94.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>III: Patient non-physical needs of the patient are attended</td>
<td>Type I</td>
<td>88.59</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.96</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>IV: Achievement of nursing care objectives is evaluated</td>
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<td>Type III</td>
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</table>

*P < 0.05. SS, sum of square; MS, mean of square.