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Patient's Perception of Noise Disturbance in the Kidney Center

*Fatimah Abdullah, MSN, BSN, RN, and Karen Rettke, RN, CDN
Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center, Phoenix, Arizona*

A 650-bed hospital in the southwest struggled with improving patient satisfaction scores related to noise in the Kidney Center (KC). A team of KC nurses undertook an evidenced based (EBP) project to identify and decrease the noise during dialysis treatments. The inpatient KC is an open environment treatment area with side by side beds, televisions and dialysis machines for each patient, with a centralized nurses' station. The center runs approximately 550-875 treatments per month depending on the season.

The EBP project was designed with the PICO question: "In the KC, how will current patient's perception of noise during their treatment session compare to perception of noise level after implementation of noise reduction interventions?".

Evidence indicated promoting a quiet environment as a therapeutic intervention (Scotto, et.al.2009). Understanding fatigue is a common symptom experienced by dialysis patients, the nephrology nurse can create a restful environment of care to help mitigate and manage fatigue (Horigan, et.al.2013) through implementing noise reduction interventions. Using Topf's 24 Item Disturbance Due to Hospital Noise Scale (modified) (Topf, 1983), a pre-implementation survey was given to patients to gather baseline data on the most common and most disturbing noises. Based on patients' responses, a tailored approach to promoting a quiet environment and reducing fatigue was designed which included several nurse interventions.

The Topf scale will be given again to assess noise disturbance. Survey responses pre and post intervention implementation will be compared to determine if the patient's perception of noise/disturbance changed.

No measure of noise in the acute dialysis previously existed. The EBP process will help determine the success of noise reduction interventions, whereas other measures used on patient units, can be ineffective measures of in treatment areas. A similar process can be applied to any procedural area where the patient spends a substantial amount of time, facilitating a quiet environment conducive to healing.

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