

Assessing Patients with Expressive Aphasia

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Assessing Patients with Expressive Aphasia

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BACKGROUND

- Based upon this group's experience working on a neuroscience medical-surgical floor, the accuracy of assessing patients with expressive aphasia due to communication barriers is problematic.
- Nurses in this group have found it difficult to assess patient's orientation to the best of their ability due to lack of standard communication techniques for this population of patients.
- It is this groups' intention to implement a communication board on the unit and evaluate the nurses' assessment experience before and after its use.

PICO

Question: In nurses caring for aphasic adults, does the utilization of a picture communication board compared to traditional verbal assessment improve assessment accuracy of a patient's orientation?

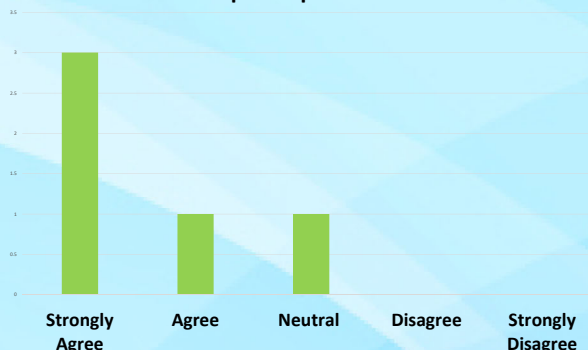
- **P** Nurses
- **I** Orientation communication board
- **C** Verbal assessment
- **O** Nurse Perception of accuracy in assessment of orientation in aphasic patients

EVIDENCE

- In certain studies, nearly 50% of nurses reported frustration due to lack of access to augmentative and alternative communication strategies. The same percentage reported that they were unsure of hospital policies regarding communication strategies. Rarely did nurses receive training from a speech pathologist concerning specific communication strategies.
- Common themes in testing communicating with aphasic patients are creating close relationships between the patient and provider and utilizing silent dialogue and physical touch as tools for communication.
- Effective communication is established if information is delivered in a manner that is understood. Adherence in following a proposed communication tool brings satisfaction and overall improvement in patient outcomes.
- Results during several studies have shown improvement in items that were in training and have shown a gaining in some computerized scores. It's understood that better outcomes are reached when tasks are tailored and individualized per patient.

OUTCOMES

RNs: "I feel I can accurately assess and document orientation status of expressively aphasic patients"



- All RNs completing the Post-Survey felt they are able to accurately document orientation status of expressively aphasic patients
- Communication Tool was well received by RNs and patients, utilized an Evidence-Based Communication board which came with a dry erase marker for patient to use
- Barriers to implementation included the COVID-19 pandemic, limited the amount of time for implementation phase of project



IMPLEMENTATION

- Strategy Description:
 - Identify patients with expressive aphasia.
 - Survey nurses taking care of said patients based on self-confidence relating to assessment and communication
 - Implement EBP communication board.
 - Re-survey nurses afterwards for changes in accuracy of assessment or confidence in being able to meet the patients' needs.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue implementation of Communication Boards on 7A
- Consider piloting on other units who encounter aphasic patients such as Neuroscience ICU

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