



Nursing Essay

Journal Reflection on Promoting Sleep in the ICU

Nursing is not only crucial in the medial aspect but also the provision of overall care to patients. Care ranges from the protection of patients and the community, promotion of health in individuals, prevention of illnesses, offering treatment and advocating for sustainable health across populations. Nursing extends beyond providing medical care to patients in hospitals to ensuring a comfortable environment that promotes healing. In this regard, this paper seeks to reflect the nursing practice of promoting sleep in the ICU.

Working in the ICU requires dedicated health care professionals who monitor and provide treatment to patients around the clock. Several factors influence sleep in the ICU such as noise, lighting and the patient's health condition among other reasons. To ensure adequate care at the ICU, an environment conducive for sleep should be maintained at all times. As a result, quality sleep which is critical in the healing process of a patient is provided. Although the hospitals are significantly quieter at night, still, nurses ought to ensure proper sleep for patients as and when required. The night shift is particularly significant since the body needs rest naturally. Noise, effects of the medicine administered to patients and light have to be adjusted to promote sleep.

The ICU unit of the hospital is on the top floor thus minimizing the noise from other groups in the hospital. Also, the hospital has restricted entry into the floor which



Nursing Essay

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ensures minimal interaction on the floor in the form of casual exchanges from nurses and other people. Interactions with the patient are limited to nurses that offer care and authorized visitors. The nurse also ensured that the unit had minimal light. Minimal light promotes calmness which encourages sleep. Rubert, Long, and Hutchinson, (2007) confirm that sleep deprivation is a common stressor during critical illness in 61% of the patients. Thus, it is crucial that sleep in promoted and improved in the ICU. I was surprised that the same practice applied even to patients on sedatives or other sleep-inducing drugs. As a result, uniformity and general procedure are followed thus ensuring continued sleep in case the patient unexpectedly wakes up from sleep. Also, natural sleep aids such as melatonin are administered to patients. Besides regulating an individual's sleep pattern, melatonin also helps manage blood pressure and immunity.

Decision making in the ICU highly depends on the nurses since they are primarily charged with monitoring the sleep patterns of the patients. However, consultation is allowed with doctors to ensure optimum health care provision (Nova, 2019). The nurses have to keep checking on the patients to ensure that they are rested and that they are not disturbed. Despite this appearing tiresome, it ensures that quality service is delivered. Leadership and communication are imperative in ensuring that patients are well taken care of. Since different nurses attend to patients, disclosure is necessary for



Nursing Essay

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ensuring that each nurse is aware of the procedures that have been done or not on the patient.

Nursing practices in the ICU have extensively advanced to ensure quality delivery of services to patients. From experience at the hospital, I have been able to learn that much is done to ensure a conducive environment for patients. For example, the use of reduced light and natural sleep aids has enlightened me. Further research has been conducted to reveal other techniques for promoting sleep. However, they have not been utilized. For example, Wong (2015) asserts that background music aids in calmness and inducing sleep. Music should be considered as a tool in aiding sleep to patients since there is evidence that supports its application.

In conclusion, promoting sleep in the ICU has been a core practice by nurse practitioners that has been embraced in the hospital. In addition to aiding in healing, it ensures that quality life and sustainable care is given to patients. These practices should be adopted in hospitals with ICU units to encourage the holistic provision of care.



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