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Literature Review of Nosocomial Infections Passed Through Nurses’ Personal Items

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Abstract
- Nosocomial infections are infections whose development is favored by a hospital environment.
- In 2001, CDC stated that there were 721,800 nosocomial infections.
- Nosocomial infections can develop due to non-sanitized hospital equipment, or dirty room environment.

Problem Statement
- In 2002, nosocomial infections killed approximately 1.7 million cases of hospital-acquired infections per year in the U.S.
- Nurses in contact with most patients and pose the greatest risk to their patients’ health.
- Nurse handwashing is the standard precaution, there is still a risk of transferring pathogens through their scrubs that they take home, their stethoscopes that are not being sanitized between patients, and their cell phones.
- Nosocomial infections can cause mortality, morbidity, and have a high cost for hospitals.
- Insurance companies and patients are not responsible for costs if a patient acquires a nosocomial infection.
- The purpose of this study is to look at how much nurses’ personal items influence nosocomial infections on intensive care units (ICU) and Medical-Surgical floors.

Literary Findings

Scrubs
- Pathogenic bacteria was found on all scrubs
- Majority of the bacteria was found on pockets (pants and shirts), area of the abdomen, and the crotch area
- Literature found that it was not the scrubs that were the problem, but it was hand hygiene compliance.

Stethoscopes
- There was pathogenic bacteria found on all of the stethoscopes’ diaphragms.
- The literature concluded that all stethoscopes worn by nurses and other healthcare providers should be sanitized between each patient.
- Stethoscopes have the potential of being a fertile source of nosocomial infections.

Cell Phones
- One article found that the cell phones used in the hospital by nurses carried pathogenic microbes.
- The other two studies found that no pathogenic microbes were found on their phones.
- For these studies, there phones were never to have any pathogenic microbes before the phones lived in a hospital environment.
- The research indicated that the cleanliness of the cell phones was not in the cleanliness of the employees’ hands.

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Research Proposal

The research design will be a questionnaire survey design and the instruments, created to test the hypothesis of this study are: demographics include: age, gender, length of time as nurse, length of time at current hospital, educational background, average hours worked per week, 12 or 8 hour shifts, do you work at more than one hospital, or currently.

Survey
- Verify washing
- How many times do you wash your hands during your shift?
- Do you use hot water while washing your hands?
- Do you wash your hands and forearms for the recommended 15-30 seconds in between patients’ rooms?
- Cell Phone
- How confident are you, on a scale from 1 to 10, that your cell phone is germ free?
- Do you keep your cell phone on you while you are working on the floor?
- Do you bring your cell phone out while you are working?
- If yes, do you wash your cell phone for the recommended 15-30 seconds in between patients’ rooms?
- Do you wash your hands each time before and after touching your cell phone?
- Stethoscope
- Are your stethoscopes brought from home or supplied by the hospital?
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- Are your stethoscopes brought from home or supplied by the hospital?
- What are a few situations where you have not applied the PPE needed for your patient?
- How often do you apply the PPE needed for your patient?
- How confident are you, on a scale from 1 to 10, that your cell phone is germ free?
- Do you use the proper isolation precautions when walking into a patient's room from 0-10?
- How likely are you to use the proper isolation precautions when walking into a patient's room from 0-10?
- How likely are you to use the proper isolation precautions when walking into a patient's room from 0-10?

Indications for Clinical Practice

The importance of this study is to see if nurses have the time to properly don the correct PPE while working and if nurses are washing their hands as much as they need to. In all of the literature reviewed that was read the two things that nurses need to make a priority while working are: proper hand washing and using alcohol to clean their stethoscopes between patient contact. There are 1.7 million cases a year that are traced back to nosocomial infections, and hospitals need to do more education and put more of an importance on the cleanliness of all employees’ hands.

References

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