Enhancing Nurse Knowledge Regarding Incontinence to Prevent Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries

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Incontinence associated dermatitis (IAD) is a skin condition that occurs from prolonged exposure to urinary or fecal incontinence. Prevalence of IAD in the acute setting ranges from 18-95% and contributes to inflammation, pain, and increases risk of developing hospital acquired pressure injuries (HAPIs). There are deviations in evidence-based practice and management among healthcare professionals leading to misdiagnosis, improper IAD treatment, and HAPI development. This doctoral project examines the impact of enhancing nursing knowledge of IAD to reduce HAPIs using a pre- and post-implementation design. A convenience sample of 45 nurses, on a 34-bed Progressive Care Unit at an acute care facility in Southern California, participated in an IAD educational module to assess a change in nursing knowledge. Monthly and quarterly surveillance data of HAPI occurrence and incontinence incidence were collected. The IAD education used the Ghent Global IAD categorization tool (GLOBAID) and Knowledge Instrument on Incontinence-Associated Dermatitis for Clinicians (KNOW-IAD) to measure IAD etiology, classification, and management knowledge. Participant scores resulted in an overall increase in nurse IAD knowledge while concurrently decreasing HAPIs with 62.5% of patients having incontinence ($p < 0.001$). Zero monthly HAPI’s were noted four of the five months post-implementation, as well as on the next two consecutive prevalence studies. Expanding the education hospital wide and providing education annually will increase generalizability and streamline the implementation of IAD education. Nurse-driven IAD educational modules are effective in improving nursing knowledge of IAD and may help reduce HAPI incidence.

Keywords: incontinence, incontinence associated dermatitis, hospital acquired pressure injuries, incontinence associated dermatitis education, evidence-based practice guidelines, risk factors.