

Communication Assessment Tools for Emergency Department Nurses who Interact with Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

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Abstract

Problem Statement:

- Communication is an essential part of every nurse-patient interaction. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) often use nontraditional ways of communicating that can complicate the ideal nurse-patient interaction. When a patient presents with a different method of communicating, the nurse must possess tools available to facilitate a successful interaction. Identifying such a tool or if one cannot be found building a sample tool is vital for positive patient outcomes for individuals with communication barriers.

Purpose:

- The purpose of the project is to find a tool for emergency department (ED) nurses to use with patients who communicate differently.

Methods:

- A web-based search for guidelines included web-based, conversations with experts in communication, and expanded into other fields of study.
- AGREE II Instrument used to assess guidelines and Qualtrics used to create and disperse the survey.

Inclusion criteria:

- Participants needed to be able to access an online survey, read, comprehend, and respond to survey questions in English.

Analysis:

- The responses were evaluated for common themes, and descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data.

Implications for Practice:

- Identifying or building a communication tool is vital for positive patient outcomes for individuals with communication barriers.



Introduction

- Clear and effective communication is the basis of every successful nurse and patient interaction. When the nurse cannot communicate with the patient, important aspects of care are missed.
- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are a patient population who communicate differently.

Project Description & Design

PICO(T):
(P) In emergency room nurses who interact with patients who have communication differences, how does (I) using guidelines for evaluating a patient's communication compared to (C) not using guidelines for evaluating a patient's communication (O) impact the rate of successful patient interactions?

- Design:**
- Research/practice-based inquiry approach
 - Quantitative and qualitative methods
 - Thematic analysis
 - Plan-Do-Study-Act framework
 - Search for current nursing communication guideline
 - Expansion of search to other fields of study
 - Creation of survey

Table 1: Communication Survey Responses

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Question 1	0	0	2	2	4
Question 2	0	0	1	5	2
Question 3	0	0	1	3	4
Question 4	0	0	0	1	7
Question 5	0	0	0	1	7
Question 6	0	0	1	2	5

Significance

- The amount of time and effort needed to communicate with individuals with IDD who communicated differently (Donner & Wiklund Gustin, 2021 and Arrey et al., 2019)
- Provider attitudes towards patients who communicate differently (Ryan & Scior, 2016)
- Negative provider attitudes towards communication is potential barrier to appropriate care (Abdi & Metcalf, 2020)
- Diagnostic overshadowing is a barrier to the appropriate care (Javaid et al., 2019)
- Providers would benefit from training on communicating with individuals who communicate differently (Howie et al., 2021 and Al-Kalaldeh et al., 2020)
- Articles stated gaps in the literature for a communication guideline (Array et al., 2019, Donner & Wiklund Gustin, 2021)

“Training on how the brain reacts to stress and trauma and how this impacts communications of the brain.”

Outcomes & Evaluation

- Eight surveys completed from the 24 invitations sent with 33.3% response rate
- Evaluation of guidelines or protocols using the AGREE II Instrument
 - Dynamic AAC Evaluation Protocol
 - Healthcare for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
 - Vineland 3
- Quantitative data analysis completed with tools available in Qualtrics
 - Two questions with 100% agreement from respondents
 - None of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with any of the questions
- Thematic analysis
 - Two reviewers used step by step approach
 - Data reviewed; themes developed
 - Question 7: utilizing a support person, communication tool, focus on therapeutic relationship
 - Question 8: training in non-verbal communication skills environmental and nurse's self-regulation, recognition of the individual with IDD's fear
 - Question 9: There is no one best way to teach an adult learner
 - Question 10: Holistic care
- Objectives Evaluation
 - Find a current nursing guideline or protocol to assess a patient's ability to communicate.
 - No current guideline found.
 - If a guideline does exist, contact a local hospital to determine if it is being used.
 - Unable to complete since no guideline found.
 - If a guideline does not exist, search other fields of study such as speech therapy or first responders to determine if there is a guideline in existence that could be modified for ED nurses to use. Create a survey to obtain suggestions on what should be included in the creation of a new guideline.
 - Completed by finding and analyzing guidelines from other fields and creating the survey.
- Report findings, identify barriers, and make recommendations.

“Talk to the individual with IDD even if support person there.”

“Meeting people where they are at, seeking to communicate in a way they understand is a worthwhile challenge and necessary for providing holistic, compassionate care”

Survey Questions

- Question 1** Does the patient respond appropriately to at least three basic gestures (for example, head nod for yes, head shake for no, hand out for give me, reaching, waiving, clapping)?
- Question 2** Does the patient use unconventional gestures (examples: pulling on people, vocalizing, eye gaze)?
- Question 3** Does the patient need more time to comprehend and reply to the question?
- Question 4** Is there a support person/family member present, willing, and able to assist the nurse in understanding the patient?
- Question 5** Does the individual need auxiliary aid/service to provide necessary communication? Examples include sign language interpreters, braille materials, simplified language documents, Computer Assisted Real Time text (CART).
- Question 6** Does the patient follow instruction with one action and one object (for example, “Point to your toes” “raise your hand”)?
- Question 7** Please write your response to this question: What do you believe is the most important piece of information an emergency room nurse needs to know about an individual's communication abilities/needs?
- Question 8** Please write your response to this question: What type of communication training does an emergency department nurse need to communicate with individuals with different communication abilities/needs?
- Question 9** Please write your response to this question: What is the best way to teach communication to an adult learner?
- Question 10** Please include any other comments or suggestions.

Conclusions

- A guideline for ED nurses to use when communicating with individuals with IDD is needed
- The presence of a support person is viewed as important when communicating with an individual with IDD
- Knowledge of auxiliary aids/services used for communication
- Focus on therapeutic relationship
- Training in non-verbal communication methods
- No one best way to teach an adult learner
- Holistic care

“People with IDD will respond to nonverbal cues during communication even if they do not fully comprehend what's being said. They may nod because the speaker is nodding or smile because someone else is smiling. This can give false understanding of a person's ability to respond effective during conversation.”

Recommendations

- Further study into the field of IDD nursing, stroke recovery, Alzheimer's disease and dementia protocols
- The creation of a second survey from a new literature review
- Communication training for ED nurses
- Distribute more surveys with reminders to reply

References

