

Note: This paper was delivered to the Critical Care Symposium in Vancouver, WA on November 12, 2013. It was voted Best Poster and Presentation by 600+ conference participants. It was also delivered in June, 2014 at the American Holistic Nurses Association conference in Portland, OR as a poster and as a day-long pre-conference workshop.

Creating Calm in the Storm: An Innovative Approach to Integrating Complimentary Therapies into Patient Care

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Purpose: To improve symptom management and increase patient satisfaction through the integration of acupuncture and Reiki into traditional nursing interventions.

Background: During hospitalization patients experience a myriad of physical, psychological and environmental stressors which can impede the healing process. A variety of complimentary therapies, including acupuncture and Reiki, have demonstrated success in managing pain, stress, and anxiety, thus helping to create calm in the chaos, promote healing, and improve patient comfort and satisfaction.

Project Description/Methods: Twelve nurses trained in acupuncture and Reiki working on a 39-bed progressive care unit participated in study. These nurses offered acupuncture and/or Reiki to 110 patients as patient condition warranted and nurse time allowed. Pre- and post-treatment pain and anxiety levels were assessed separately using 0-10 scales where 0 = no anxiety or pain and 10 = worst anxiety or pain. Relief of other symptoms such as nausea and sleep deprivation was assessed as appropriate. Patients were asked if they would agree to another treatment and patient satisfaction was measured using a 0-10 scale, 10 being most satisfied.

Results: Average pre-treatment pain score was reported at 6.6. Average post-treatment pain score was reported at 3.1; a decrease of 3.5 points. Pre-treatment anxiety score averaged 6.5. Post-treatment anxiety scores averaged 2.4; a decrease of 4.1 points. Patients also reported other benefits including improved sleep, decreased nausea, and decreased confusion and agitation. Patient satisfaction averaged 9.4 on a 0-10 scale with 10 being the most satisfied with treatment. Average length of treatment was 18 minutes.

Conclusions: Incorporating acupuncture and Reiki into patient care of this sampling demonstrated a measurable decrease in pain, anxiety and other symptoms with a high degree of patient satisfaction.