

## CARE OF ADOLESCENT PATIENTS IN THE PEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

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**Purpose:** The aim of this project is educate and empower nurses to meet the unique needs of adolescent patients during their hospitalization in the PICU. Specifically, will an educational intervention for PICU nurses increase adolescent patients' participation in medical rounds and plans of care?

**Background and Evidence Review:** Studies report that privacy, sense of control, independence, confidentiality, assuming medical responsibility and access to healthcare personnel with adolescent expertise are important needs for adolescent patients. A pre-survey administered to PICU nurses at LPCH found that while 50% of the respondents felt comfortable caring for adolescent patients, many challenges were identified. Most notably, only 10% of able adolescent patients participated in rounds and only 34% asked questions regarding plan of care. Thus, improvement is needed with regards to sense of control, independence and assuming medical responsibility for the adolescent patient.

**Methods:** An educational flyer, "Adolescents Need the PICU: Privacy, Inclusion, Control & Understanding," was developed based on the researched needs of adolescent patients that included tangible suggestions for improving nursing care. The flyer was distributed throughout the unit and individual teaching was provided to the bedside nurses. A resource binder including additional educational materials for nurses and adolescents was produced and made available to the unit.

**Results:** A post-intervention survey was administered to PICU nurses where 90% of respondents had seen and read the flyer. The results of this survey showed an increase in adolescent participation in rounds to 16%, and an increase in patients asking questions regarding plan of care to 50% of the time. The survey also showed that nurses were providing updates on plans of care directly to the adolescent patient 89% of the time, compared to 74% pre-survey. Finally, 74% found the flyer very helpful and 60% stated they were very likely to use the suggestions when caring for adolescent patients.

**Conclusion:** The preliminary results of this project show that there has been an increase in adolescent participation in rounds and asking questions regarding plan of care. This project will remain in the intervention phase with further teaching to additional PICU nurses, educating PICU physicians, expanding to acute care units, and making resources available on the LPCH intranet. Further time is needed to achieve the stated aims and assess significance on the intervention. Additionally, future projects will include interviews and assessments of the adolescent patients directly.

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