

Improving Patient Safety Through the Prevention and Treatment of Delirium

Newark Wayne Community Hospital
Newark New York

Background

- Newark Wayne Community Hospital (NWCH) is a 120 bed rural hospital located in Wayne County, NY.
- NWCH is the only hospital in Wayne County
- Average daily census ~ 63 acute care patients
- 65% inpatients are older than 65 years of age
- NWCH is an affiliate of the Rochester General Health System.

Problem

- Delirium, an acute decline in attention and cognition, represents a common and severe problem for hospitalized patients.
- Delirium commonly initiates a cascade of events resulting in a loss of independence, increased mortality, increased costs, and poor hospital experience.
- Delirium may complicate 20% of hospital stays for those 65 years and older.
- Delirium may double the cost of a hospitalization,
- Delirium patients have an estimated mortality rate of up to 35% in one year.

The Need

- Current delirium research has often been focused at urban hospitals where geriatric consult services are available.
- Literature has focused on treatment of delirium rather than the prevention of delirium.
- There is a need to develop a risk stratification to identify those at risk for delirium, and early prevention.
- To involve the patient and family in a prevention protocol
- Standardized delirium education for staff
- Early identification of delirium by all staff including physicians to prevent complications.

Outcomes

- Decrease in length of stay
- Decreased hospital costs
- Improved patient disposition to home

Interventions

The Nursing and Medical Staff have implemented a protocol that focuses on the geriatric population. The program goals include;

- Keeping the patient engaged and their body and mind active while hospitalized
- Early recognition of delirium
- Preventing sleep cycle disruption
- Prevention of falls

Current and Future

Current and future actions include:

- Expanding education on delirium
- Expanding access of geriatric appropriate telemedicine consultations
- Continuous improved awareness and modification of the hospital environment for the geriatric patient
- Continue to expand the pharmacy review of medications
- Continue to monitor outcome metrics in our geriatric patients

