

Introduction

Gratitude is commonly understood as the uplifting emotion of expressing appreciation and thankfulness

The benefits of gratitude are well-documented in terms of psychological well-being, further research is required to establish its impact on physical well-being and outcomes

Aims

This study sought to evaluate perceptions of a nurse-led, interprofessional-focused gratitude intervention on patient hospitalization experience and if, by asking gratitude-related questions. Additionally, the study aimed to explore whether registered nurses (RNs) could identify actionable items for interprofessional team members to enhance the patient experience posed by these questions.

Methods

A prospective mixed-method descriptive study was approved by IRB

- conducted on a 20-bed inpatient acute psychiatric unit (APU) in an academic community-based
- Sample: RN (N=16) / Patient (N=75)
- nonparametric analysis was applied, with median (inter-quartile range, IQR) mean (SD), and median (IQR).
- Qualitative analysis was employed for open-ended questions from patient and RN responses

Results

Patient Perceptions of a Nurse-Led, Interprofessional Focused Gratitude Intervention

| Measure | N=75 |
|--|---|
| Number of Gratitude Entries Forms Completed per Patient, Mean (SD) [range] | 7.9 (5.39) [1-27] |
| Question+: As a patient, how helpful was it for your overall experience to share what was working well regarding your hospitalization, or what were you generally thankful/grateful for in life?, mean(SD), median (Q1-Q3)* | 4.2(1.22), 5 (3-5) |
| # (%) | |
| (1) Very unhelpful | 5 (6.7%) |
| (2) Somewhat unhelpful | 3 (4.0%) |
| (3) Neutral | 11 (14.7%) |
| (4) Somewhat helpful | 11 (14.7%) |
| (5) Very helpful | 45 (60.0%) |
| | 56 (74.7%) Answered Somewhat or Very Helpful |
| Question+: As a patient, how often was a nurse and/or other healthcare team member able to improve your hospitalization experience after sharing your response to the above question?, mean (SD), median (Q1-Q3)* | 4.2(0.98), 4 (4-5) |
| # (%) | N=74 |
| (1) Never | 2 (2.7%) |
| (2) Seldom | 2 (2.7%) |
| (3) Somewhat often | 12 (16.2%) |
| (4) Very often | 23 (31.1%) |
| (5) Always | 35 (47.3%) |
| *p<0.001 | 58 (78.3%) Answered Very often or always |
| +Wilcoxon signed-rank test | |
| ++Binomial test (test value=50%) | |

Primary Themes Patient Comments 1209 units coded

Theme 1: Thankful/ grateful for caring team members 584 (48.3%)

- "I am grateful to have a wonderful nurse who encourages me to do better and believes in me"
- "I'm thankful for the wonderful and understanding staff and I am grateful for this experience with a lesson learned."

Theme 2: Thankful/grateful for condition-related resources and management

- "Well my meds are on time and the nurses and doctors are great. I'm grateful for them treating me and getting me where I can control myself better."

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

A limitation of the study was some patients and APU RNS did not complete each gratitude data point throughout the study. This study's findings may not be generalizable to other settings.

Future research recommendations are to examine if certain psychiatric diagnosis determine a patient's perception of hospitalization experience and experience of gratitude.

Discussion

Findings from the inpatient adult APU study demonstrated statistically significant patient rankings of the gratitude intervention as helpful and as improving their hospitalization experience

Implications for practice are to include a gratitude intervention as part of RN and patient oncoming shift dialogue, enabling patients to communicate what they are thankful/grateful for, through hospital discharge. This also enables RNs to take additional actions as needed to address the patient's response

References

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