Post Mortem Nursing Care Effectiveness as Perceived by Mortuary Practitioners

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Background

- Death is a common event in hospitals and other healthcare facilities. (Gomes & Higginson, 2008; Hand, 2013)
- The majority of these patients will receive some form of post mortem nursing care.
- Interventions used in post mortem care are largely derived from tradition rather than evidence.
- Policies concerning post mortem care vary by institution (Smith-Stoner & Hand, 2012)
- Mortuary practitioners are the next care giver and in a position to provide an expert opinion concerning the effectiveness of post mortem nursing care.
- Similar research has occurred and been published (Hand, 2013, Hand, 2014), but within the geographic confines of a single Midwestern state.
- Further inquiry is needed with a larger geographic scope.

Purpose/Aims

- The purpose of the study is to examine post mortem nursing care effectiveness from the perspective of the Mortuary Practitioner.

- Specific aims are:
  - To describe how commonly observed post mortem nursing care interventions are perceived to help or hinder achieving a desired cosmetic appearance of the deceased patient.
  - To identify and describe recommendations for alternative care practice that differ from what Mortuary practitioners commonly observe.

Methods: Approach & Sampling

- A qualitative descriptive approach is used.
- A convenience sample of approximately 200 mortuary practitioners will be contacted via email and phone and invited to participate.
- Participants complete an open ended web based questionnaire addressing the following areas pertaining to post mortem nursing care:
  - Positioning of the body
  - Use of ties and ligatures
  - Removal of tubes and drains
  - Oral Care and Denture Appliances
  - Bathing and Sanitation
  - Labeling and Shrouding

Methods: Data Analysis

- NVIVO qualitative analysis software will be used in data analysis.
- Steps in data analysis include:

  - Reading each response several times
  - Initial coding to identify themes
  - Clustering based on similarity
  - Elimination of duplication, final theme labeling,
  - Identifying key exemplars. (Hand, 2013; Smith-Stoner & Hand, 2012; Stoner, Hand, & Foley, 2010)

Results and Discussion

- Data collection and analysis is currently in progress. It is anticipated that results will be available June 2015.

Implications

- Potential implications include:
  - Education- Curricular modifications pertaining to pertaining to post mortem nursing care based evidence.
  - Practice- Opportunity to approach post mortem care and the development of policy and procedure from a perspective of evidence versus tradition.
  - Research- Strong need for further inquiry on an international level and to examine how patient/family preferences are incorporated into post mortem nursing care.

References

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