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Evidence-based nursing meeting practice.

*How do critical care nurses experience a weaning
protocol based on medical evidence?*

Evidence:

- To see and realize, manifest, a concept used in phenomenology; experiences, statements, objects in the world / existence (Martinsen, 2005)
- Something is apparent, manifest, unquestionable and visible. Related to "know", what we know and have knowledge about, dare we to visualize (Eriksson et al., 1999).



Evidence-based medicine:

- “Evidence based medicine is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about care of individual patients. The practice of evidence based medicine means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research”. (Sackett et al, 1996)
- Based on medical science
- This definition is also used by nurses



Evidence-based nursing:

- Is not achieved by means of scientific knowledge and different research results only, but through the union of logic of the head, the hand and the heart, with the ethos of care, Caritas.
- The head represents logical thinking, the hand stands for the acting human being and the heart symbolizes ethics.
- It is important to obtain evident knowledge within the nursing profession, but also within medical observation and technology (Eriksson et al., 1999).



The protocol / medical knowledge

- *”I have learnt much more about medicine than I could before...and when you are working with such serious things, being able to observe everything, than you have to know what to look after. Sometimes I call ourselves for “half-doctors”.*
- *“Nursing goes far beyond it, I presume. I think it is difficult to put nursing into protocols”*



The protocol:

- It does not describe nursing or only partly what nursing is
- Nursing is understood as something else than the knowledge that the protocol describes
- It is mainly describing the technical side of the weaning process / the physiological aspects.
- It is good guideline
- It is representing a delegated task from the doctors and it is inter-professional



Nursing

- *“I think it is important, that the patients cooperate and all the time tell them what is going on and why the breathing may be heavier. And tell them that you are looking after them and than I think they get calmer and know what is happening and that this something that most patients have to get through”*
- *I really believe in mobilizing the patients, get them to wake up; up in a chair...when sitting with the feet on the floor, they start to orientate more”*
- *“My experience is that there is a fundamental difference in sitting in the bed or in a chair”*



Nursing:

- The weaning process is demanding when it comes to nursing
- Many aspects of nursing are not described in the protocol
- It is essential to give information / communicate with the patients
- It is not always possible to anticipate the effect of nursing interventions
- Moral aspects of nursing are described as sensibility, communicating with the patients and to express protection



Different experience gives different practice

- *“In a way the protocol is a written document of their experience – this is the way we always have done it”*
- *“You have been studying theoretical knowledge, so in a way you know how things are supposed to be. But then something happens to the patient, that gives you the feeling of missing something”.*
- *“I am more humble now than I was when starting here as newly educated. But you don't know before you have some experience”*



Teamwork

- *“I think that when the patients are going to breath by themselves... that is something that we are learning from each other. And it is coming with experience. I try and than rather go back”*
- *“That is why I think it is so important that we ask each other. We have different experience, different knowledge... Some are better to observe than others”*



Teamwork:

- Estimations about the weaning protocol versus the patients are discussed with colleagues
- The nurses are learning from each other through teamwork
- The protocol is a starting point for teamwork
- Assessments according to weaning the patients are primarily learnt within the team of nurses / colleagues



Conclusion:

- The protocol is important as a guideline and as a base for teamwork
- Medical knowledge is important for critical care nurses
- If medical evidence is too much emphasized it can displace other parts of nursing knowledge
- The results suggests that a concept of evidence that accounts for more than medical evidence will be more relevant
- Theory of clinical judgement will also illuminate the complexity of practice

