

Exploring ICU Nurses' Perception of Error, Error Reporting and Error Disclosure

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Project Summary:

The goal of this study was to explore ICU nurses' perceptions of error, error reporting and disclosure through scenario based interviews with ICU nurses from three hospital sites. These sites included one pediatric (The Hospital for Sick Children), one community (Markham-Stouffville Hospital) and one urban hospital (St. Michael's Hospital) in the Greater Toronto Area.

Following approval from the Research Ethics Boards at these sites, this study used 5 error scenarios as the prompt for open-ended and Yes/No questions in interviews. The scenarios varied with regard to the nature of the event, the ambiguity of the event, the primary participant in the event, the nature of the team relationship, and the outcome to the patient and scope of practice. The first scenario involved a resident, the second a fellow nurse, the third a senior physician, the fourth a respiratory therapist, and the final scenario was based on a "near miss" incident. 4 of the 5 scenarios were universal across the sites. The fourth scenario involving an RT was slightly modified at the community hospital so that it was applicable to their environment.

The scenarios were derived in collaboration with nurse representatives/key insiders from the ICU at each site. Participants constituted a convenience sample of nurses who responded to a flyer posted by the key insider at each institution. However efforts were made by these key insiders to ensure representation of a range of experience including novice, intermediate and expert nurses at each of the 3 sites. Nurses were enlisted to participate in the study until data saturation was reached at each site. 13 participants were interviewed at the urban hospital, with one participant having to return to work half way through the interview. 12 participants were interviewed at each of the other institutions.

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Anonymity was preserved by replacing all identifying features with numbers. While Yes/ No questions were asked, responses were sometimes not immediately obvious and had to be interpreted. 2 raters independently coded such responses with a percent agreement of 100%. The data was analyzed for emergent themes in grounded theory tradition. Using NVIVO 7 – QSR international – dominant themes and trends were identified across the scenarios and sites and within each domain – namely error perception, error reporting and error disclosure.

The project is currently in the manuscript phase. Plans/ideas for dissemination of findings include journal publication, feedback to participants, panel discussions at professional conferences, symposium poster boards and lunch and learn seminars.