

Nursing Documentation in Pediatric-Nursing Care

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Background and aim

The notes in the nursing record of a child's hospital stay should give guidance to the process of nursing-care practice, as well as written evidence of that practice. Earlier studies have shown that the nursing documentation is often inadequate, both in regard to the patient's needs and to what the law prescribes¹. This is true also for pediatric-nursing care². In the work of facilitating systematic nursing documentation, the so-called VIPS -model was developed¹. The aims of this study were as follows:

- to investigate whether the keywords in a nursing documentation model, the so-called VIPS model, were suitable in pediatric-nursing care
- to clarify the content represented by the keywords and
- to propose from the findings of the study, additional text in the description of the key words, in order to make the VIPS -model more suitable for use in pediatric-nursing care.

Method and results

The methods used in the study included pediatric-case studies, questionnaires to pediatric nurses and reviews of nursing records. In the case-studies, the nurses described in writing what kind of care they needed to record in children's records in relation to the different key-words of the VIPS -model. The answers were analysed and provided the basis for additional text for the different keywords. Partly different questionnaires were sent on three occasions to nurses interested in nursing documentation, i.e. those who were working on a voluntary basis on the development of nursing documentation, as well as those who had a formal responsibility for the development of nursing documentation. Altogether, 81 nurses answered the questionnaires. In the case-studies, the nurses also gave examples of nursing-care information that need to be recorded. The documentation of nursing care was examined in 45 records from pediatric units at three university hospitals in Sweden. Altogether 769, notes or units of analysis were analysed and compared with the revised text for pediatric-nursing care in the keywords. Most of the nurses said that it was possible to describe pediatric-nursing care by using the keywords. On comparing the findings from the case-studies with the existing text that explained the keywords, they were found to be very similar. A few clarifications needed to be made in order to enable the keywords to be used for documentation in children's records. The review of the records showed that most notes in the area of nursing history concerned reasons for contact or admission notes, social history and the child's health history. In the area of nursing status, needs and problems with breathing, and nutritional needs were most frequent. In the area of nursing interventions, the key word "special care" which means nursing initiated or prescribed interventions such as examinations, drug administration and care in relation to tubes, drains or pain relief, was most frequent. Observer agreement was tested and found suitable. A few lines were added to extend the keywords. The study showed that the VIPS -model was suitable for the documentation of pediatric-nursing care.

References

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