



Enhancing Patient Understanding of Delirium in Older Adults through Quality Improvement Methods

Achebe Toni*

Department of Geriatric, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

***Corresponding author:** Achebe Toni, Department of Geriatric, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria; E-mail: atoni987@yahoo.com

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Description

Delirium is a common condition among older adults that is characterized by acute confusion and disorientation. It can be caused by a range of factors, including medication changes, medical illness, and surgery. Delirium is often temporary, but it can be a serious condition that requires prompt medical attention.

There are several types of delirium, including hyperactive delirium, hypoactive delirium, and mixed delirium. Hyperactive delirium is characterized by agitation, restlessness, and disorientation, while hypoactive delirium is characterized by lethargy, apathy, and inattention. Mixed delirium is a combination of hyperactive and hypoactive delirium.

Older adults are at an increased risk of developing delirium due to a number of factors, including age-related changes in the brain, chronic medical conditions, and medication use. Additionally, older adults may have a higher risk of developing delirium due to hospitalization, surgery, and other medical interventions.

Here are some steps that can be taken to improve health literacy about delirium in older adult patients.

Provide clear and simple information

Use clear and simple language when providing information to patients with delirium. Avoid medical jargon and complex terminology. Use visual aids and other tools to help patients better understand their condition and treatment.

Engage family members or caregivers

Family members and caregivers can play an important role in improving health literacy for older adult patients with delirium. They can provide support and help patients understand their condition and treatment options.

Use teach-back techniques

Teach-back is a technique where patients are asked to repeat back what they have learned to ensure they have understood the information

correctly. This technique can be especially useful for patients with delirium, who may have difficulty retaining information.

Provide written materials

Providing written materials, such as brochures or pamphlets, can help reinforce important information and provide patients with a reference to review later.

Use interdisciplinary teams

Delirium is a complex condition that requires a multidisciplinary approach to treatment. An interdisciplinary team, including doctors, nurses, social workers, and other healthcare professionals, can work together to provide comprehensive care and ensure that patients have a better understanding of their condition and treatment options.

Provide education

Healthcare providers should provide education about delirium to older adults and their families. This education can be delivered through brochures, handouts, or online resources.

Use plain language

Healthcare providers should use plain language when discussing delirium with patients and their families. Avoid using medical jargon or complicated terminology that may be difficult for patients to understand.

Emphasize prevention

Older adults and their families should be educated on ways to prevent delirium, including avoiding unnecessary medication changes, managing chronic medical conditions, and staying well hydrated.

Highlight the importance of early detection

It is important to recognize the early signs of delirium so that it can be treated promptly. Patients and their families should be educated on the signs and symptoms of delirium, which may include confusion, disorientation, and changes in behavior.

Provide resources

Healthcare providers should provide patients and their families with resources, such as support groups and online communities, that can help them manage delirium.

Follow up

Healthcare providers should follow up with patients and their families after education is provided to ensure that they understand the information and are able to apply it in practice.

Recognizing the symptoms of delirium and taking steps to prevent and manage the condition is important for the well-being of older adults. Healthcare providers can play a critical role in educating patients and their families about delirium and providing resources to manage the condition. By improving health literacy about delirium and taking proactive steps to prevent and manage the condition, older adults can receive the care they need and improve their overall health outcomes.

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