Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Nursing Practice with an emphasis in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

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Utilizing the Prediction of Alcohol Withdrawal Severity Scale (PAWSS) to Improve Identification of Patients at Risk for Complicated Alcohol Withdrawal

Date: July 10, 2024
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Place: NAB 106

Abstract

Problem: Individuals who suffer from Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) are at great risk for alcohol withdrawal syndrome (AWS) when hospitalized. Symptoms and their severity greatly differ for everyone, and research shows that the identification and treatment of AWS is not only challenging but often inadequate. Uncomplicated (mild) AWS is often overtreated, while complicated (moderate to severe) AWS is often missed and, if under-diagnosed and undertreated, can lead to longer ICU and/or hospital stays and many unintended consequences.

Methods: This evidence-based practice study had a pre-post intervention design in which the Prediction of Alcohol Withdrawal Severity Scale was utilized to promptly identify individuals at risk for complicated AWS. Qualitative data was collected via retrospective and prospective chart review, including on length of stay, ICU/IMU stay, Clinical Institute Withdrawal Assessment for Alcohol- Revised (CIWA-Ar) protocol initiation, CIWA-Ar scores, and medication utilization. An independent samples T test was used to analyze the difference between data collected on the two groups.

Results: A statistically significant difference was found between the following outcomes: time from arrival to CIWA-Ar protocol initiation, time from arrival to prophylactic Librium administration, total length of hospital stay, time spent in the ICU/IMU, total Ativan administration, and the highest recorded CIWA-Ar score. There was also a decrease noted between transfers of patients to a higher level of care by 7.3%.

Implications for Practice: Widespread utilization of the PAWSS tool in inpatient settings could aid in promptly and accurately identifying patients at risk of complicated AWS and improve treatment and patient outcomes.

Defense of Dissertation Committee
Brittania Phillips, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC - Chairperson
Lisa Green, PhD, RN - Committee Faculty Member
Sarah Williamson, MSN, RN - Committee Outside Member