Nurses Forecast Hospital Quality

A study published online in *Research in Nursing and Health* revealed that perceptions from nurses about hospital quality of care closely matched the quality indicated by patient outcomes and other long-standing measurements.

The study included more than 16,000 nurses in approximately 400 hospitals in California, Florida, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The researchers examined the relationship between nurses’ reports of quality and hospitals known for nursing excellence. Higher proportions of nurses working in hospitals with good practice environments and in Magnet-recognized hospitals reported that the quality of care in their workplace was excellent.


New Practice/Program Combo Reduces Central Line Bloodstream Infections

A study published online in *Critical Care Medicine* revealed that combining several tested and proven practices for preventing central line-associated bloodstream infections with a program to improve safety, teamwork, and communication can dramatically reduce infection rates.

The research team conducted a randomized, nurse-led intervention trial in 45 intensive care units at 35 hospitals in 12 states. The intervention group of hospitals adopted a bundle of evidence-based bloodstream infection prevention practices coupled with the Comprehensive Unit-Based Safety Program, which includes having staff:

- Evaluate their culture of safety.
- Undergo science-of-safety training to understand systems and safe design.
- Identify how patients could be harmed and suggest solutions.
- Partner with a hospital executive to support safety efforts.
- Regularly learn from identified system defects and implement tools to improve teamwork and communication.
- Reevaluate the culture.

An observer, usually a nurse, used a checklist to ensure that the evidence-based practices were followed, and in each unit nurses were responsible for ensuring adherence to the intervention.

The mean rate of infection in the intervention group decreased from 4.5 infections per 1,000 days.
using central lines to 1.3 infections per 1,000 central line days, a 70% reduction. Following the trial, the intervention group continued to use the protocols and the control group adopted them.


Ads Deceive Older Adults

Researchers at the University of Iowa, examining patients with various forms of brain damage, have discovered that the ventromedial prefrontal cortex—an oval-shaped lobe approximately the size of a softball lodged in the front of the human head, right above the eyes—is the location that controls belief and doubt, which explains why some individuals are more gullible than others.

A study conducted in 2009 for the National Institute of Justice concluded that approximately 12% of Americans 60 and older—around the age that the ventromedial prefrontal cortex begins to deteriorate—had been exploited financially by a family member or a stranger.

The team drew from its Neurological Patient Registry, which was established in 1982 and has more than 500 active members with various forms of damage to one or more regions in the brain. From that pool, the researchers chose 18 patients with damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, 21 patients with damage outside the prefrontal cortex, and people with no brain damage to view advertisements mimicking ones flagged as misleading by the Federal Trade Commission, to test how much they believed or doubted the ads.

Each participant was asked to gauge how much he or she believed the deceptive ad and how likely he or she would buy the item if it were available. The researchers found that the patients with damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex were approximately twice as likely to believe a deceiving ad, even when given disclaimer information pointing out it was misleading. They were also more likely to buy the item, regardless of whether misleading information pointing out it was misleading had been corrected.


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Social Platform Keeps Older Adults Connected

Connected Living (http://www.connectedliving.com), a mission-based organization helping older adults live richer, more connected lives through the use of technology, has announced the national launch of the Connected Living Network. The social platform is expanding into leading senior living communities across the country, helping narrow the digital divide that isolates nearly 19 million older adults in the United States alone. Over the past few years, Connected Living has deployed its network at more than 200 senior living and public housing communities in 24 states and is now rolling out nationally.

Connected Living’s cloud-based social platform includes an interface tailored to older adults giving them secure access to the Internet, e-mail, and social media tools such as video chat, photos, a library, and games. The company provides on-site services to equip computer cafes; interactive displays including community and activity calendars, menus, local news, and weather; and the programming and training to allow staff and residents to fully engage with these resources. This simplified technology, coupled with classes, activities, and support, ensures adoption and sustainable use so benefits of a connected life become a reality.
