Using a Preeclampsia Assessment Tool to Enhance Self-Efficacy in Postpartum Nurses

Abstract

Background and Purpose: Preeclampsia is an increasingly-common complication of pregnancy that, if left untreated, causes widespread organ damage, seizure, stroke, and death. Because most deaths from preeclampsia occur after delivery, postpartum nurses should be prepared to promptly recognize warning signs, and to differentiate them from other common post-delivery discomforts. This quality improvement project aimed to determine whether educating postpartum nurses on a standardized assessment guideline would improve their self-efficacy recognizing preeclampsia.

Methods: This project utilized a single group pre-post survey design to measure change in postpartum nurse self-efficacy after an educational e-module based upon the CMQCC Preeclampsia Toolkit. The survey was adapted from the Self-Efficacy for Nursing Skills Evaluation and collected on a 5-point Likert scale. Nurses then used the Preeclampsia Early Recognition Tool (PERT) to evaluate patient case scenarios, with scoring accuracy being used to qualify proficiency with the tool.

Results: Thirty-six postpartum nurses were recruited from a single postpartum unit. The majority of participants were BSN-prepared with experience levels ranging from new-graduate to greater than 25 years. A paired T-test, which was used to analyze 36 matched pre-post survey responses, demonstrated a significant increase in self-efficacy (p=.000). Thirty-seven nurses completed the case-based exercises with 58.1% overall accuracy.

Conclusion: This project demonstrated that it is possible to improve nurse self-efficacy in recognizing preeclampsia in the postpartum patient using a standardized assessment tool and educational e-module based upon the CMQCC Preeclampsia Toolkit.

Implication: Findings suggest that role-specific preeclampsia training is a valuable part of ongoing competency building for postpartum nurses.

Keywords: preeclampsia, postpartum, hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, self-efficacy