

Health practitioner practice 2

Psychology



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The research by Balandin et al (2007) immediately sets out the problem that some nurses may have in communicating with those who may not possess the communication skills commonly expected; those with cerebral palsy. After setting out how important this breach of communication is by discussing previous similar research, and outlining that those with cerebral palsy often need to enter hospital more than those without the affliction, Balandin et al (2007) have made a good case on why the research on the experiences of those with cerebral palsy during hospitalization is necessary. First, the research describes the pilot study (conducted to see if research was appropriate). During this, two adults with cerebral palsy were interviewed to find their views on several things; demographics, communication in hospitals, preparation for hospital admission, most recent hospital experiences, use of communication systems and communication methods in hospitals and communication strategies that would be useful for nurses and patients alike. The pilot study is available for further research but brought up some interesting questions that have been answered by the study itself.

The study itself was approved by the ethics committee. The participants were ten adults with cerebral palsy between the ages of 35 and 61, recruited by an NGO that provides services to those with cerebral palsy. All patients were able to act as their own informants and were informed and consented ensuring that there were no problems due to literacy (or lack thereof). The format of the research was semi-structured interviews conducted over three weeks, each lasting around 60 minutes. The responses were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, allowing for both numerical and literary analysis.

The results were that all of the patients had encountered some problems with communication during hospitalization. This is a striking finding, meaning that these issues need to be addressed to allow for good healthcare practice. Numerous consequences of this problem were addressed; difficulties in explaining methods for comfortable positioning, participating in their own diagnosis and gaining access to necessary assistance. However, it must be noted that all participants felt that they were receiving good care within the hospital system, and most felt that some nurse education would be enough to solve the problem.

The issues with this research are simple. The study was very small, and thus no generalizations can be made to the cerebral palsy population in general without further research. Additionally, the participants were between 35 and 61, and thus we can know nothing of the difficulties or experiences of those below and above this age bracket. Overall, this is a good study for highlighting issues in the system but could be improved by widening participation.

Works Cited

Balandin, S. et al., 2007. Communicating with nurses: The experiences of 10 adults with cerebral palsy and complex communication needs. *Applied Nursing Research*, 20, pp. 56-62.