Integrative Therapy Use among Registered Nurses in an Acute Care Setting

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Background

• Alternatives are needed to help patients manage pain and discomfort in acute care settings.
• Integrative therapies (IT) involve complementary/alternative medicine practices assimilated into conventional care.
• The degree to which Registered Nurses (RNs) use IT remains unclear.

Methods

• A cross-sectional online survey was conducted with RNs in one western Wisconsin hospital.
• Survey results captured IT use, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as sociodemographic and training characteristics.

Sample

- Age: 32 (Median)
- Gender: 90% Female, 10% Male
- Race: 95% White, 5% Male
- Degree: 37% Associates, 57% Bachelors, 6% Graduate

Findings

• There were 164 respondents from 463 invited RNs (35% response rate).
• In the past six months, 79% reported use of IT with their patients.
• The most common IT practices were relaxed breathing, music therapy, essential oils, massage, and aromatherapy.
• Years of experience influenced IT use, but other factors such as age, gender, or nursing degree type had limited influence on IT use.
• Overall, the use of IT was generally high in this sample of hospital RNs, particularly among those trained more recently.

Conclusions

• Use of Integrative Therapies was generally high in this sample of hospital RNs.
• RNs who were clinically trained at least 14 years ago, however, were less likely to use IT.
• Follow-up analysis are being conducted to identify barriers that exist for IT implementation in clinical settings.
• Future research is needed to compare the effectiveness of RN-led IT interventions in clinical settings.

Research Questions

(1) How frequently do acute care RNs use IT techniques?
(2) What barriers exist when implementing IT in clinical settings?
(3) RNs intend to use IT in future patient care?

Sample

Age
Gender
Race
Degree

0-2
3-6
7-13
≥14

Probability of recent integrative therapy use

Integrative Therapy use by Years in Nursing Practice

Years in nursing practice

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