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Delirium and Noise in the ICU: A Partial Literature Review

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Delirium is a common problem affecting patients, with an increased prevalence among intensive care unit patient populations. The effects of delirium can be life changing, including increased length of stay, risk of injury to self and others, and increased mortality and morbidity rates. ICU delirium occurs more frequently among elderly patients, and costs associated with delirium exceed 4 billion dollars per year for mechanically ventilated patients in the U.S. alone. Nurses caring for delirious patients report an increased care burden, emotional and physical stress, burnout and personal injury. The combined effects of increased negative patient outcomes, higher costs and increased nursing care make delirium prevention a major issue in nursing today. By conducting a partial literature review, noise and sleep deprivation were identified as key modifiable risk factors associated with delirium development. Noise pollution with little clinical relevance was identified as a major factor in sleep deprivation, with nurses identified as potential leaders in noise reduction and screening tools for delirium. This paper serves as the foundation for future research into nursing interventions aimed at reducing noise and delirium in the ICU population.

Biography:

Sarah Stein is a current graduate student in the MSN program at Maryville University. Ms. Stein graduated from nursing school in 1999 and has worked throughout the U.S as a cardiothoracic surgical ICU nurse. Ms. Stein currently continues her career working at Magnet designated hospital Barnes Jewish Christian in Saint Louis, Missouri. BJC is ranked No. 12 in the U.S. on the Best Hospital's List, with the cardiothoracic surgical department ranking No. 13 in the nation. Ms. Stein is currently seeking her nurse practitioner degree in both family and psychiatric nursing, with the intention of pursuing her doctorate studies abroad.