Title: Stroke Care outside of the Neuro ICU: High Risk Stroke Patient Population Demands Creative Education through NIHSS Certification and Stroke Education Requirements in a CTICU

Abstract:

The Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit (CTICU) has a high population of patients on specialty equipment. This patient population is at a higher risk for stroke. The educational need to maintain the equipment prohibits transfer of the patient to the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for further stroke care. The CTICU leadership identified a need to have nurses NIH Stroke Scale (NIHSS) Certified to keep this patient population. In conjunction with Stroke Leadership an education plan was developed to enable the CTICU RNs to care for patients post stroke. In 2013 8 stroke alerts were called and in 2014 14 were called with the accuracy rates of 75% and 29% respectively. Following education and certification rollout, the CTICU called 16 stroke alerts in a 10 month period with a 50% accuracy rate. The hospital inpatient stroke alert accuracy rate is 10%. The CTICU was able to maintain 8 patients with a stroke diagnosis on the unit that would previously been transferred to the NICU. The CTICU service line was also able to be maintained for the Carotid Endarterectomy admissions to this unit. These patients were previously being admitted to the NICU. The CTICU nurses have to maintain stroke certification through completion of required 8 Stroke Hours per year and renewal of NIHSS every other year.