



Understanding Interprofessional Approaches to Wound Care in a Regional Hospital

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ABSTRACT:

Aim: The objective of our study is to determine if dietitian involvement improves clinical outcomes in patients with chronic wounds; particularly - length of stay, rate of wound healing, readmission rates, and mortality.

Procedure/Method: A retrospective chart review was completed at our local regional hospital in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario between January 1, 2017 and January 1, 2019. Inclusion criteria included patients: over 18, with a chronic wound (visited our outpatient wound clinic, saw a specialized wound care (ET) nurse, or whose chart included wound related keywords. Exclusion criteria included patients who died within 48 hours of admission, who had acute/traumatic wounds, or whose stay was less than 48 hours. Primary outcomes included length of stay, readmission rates, wound size (healing) and mortality. Data from 101 patients were collected and analyzed using Microsoft Excel (version 14.07237.5). Student's t-tests were performed to compare between group differences in our primary outcomes, except for mortality which was evaluated using a X^2 test.

Findings/Results: There were no significant differences in length of stay, readmission rates or mortality between patient groups. Changes in wounds were not analyzed due to variable approaches to documentation. The entire population studied had an average length of stay of 51 days. 72% of our patients received dietetic interventions. 90.9% of patients received wound care consults by specialized nursing. 89.1% of patients were treated with antibiotics. Of the patients treated with antibiotics, 70.7% had positive culture results.

Implications/Applications: This study identifies gaps in understanding of interprofessional approaches to wound care, particularly in nutritional interventions, and provides a basis for future research. Future areas of research include implementing systematic wound measurement reporting, focusing on improved antimicrobial stewardship, and developing a standardized nutritional approach to patients with wounds.