

AUDIT OF PAIN MANAGEMENT AT THE SBAH PAEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY UNIT



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INTRODUCTION

- The paediatric oncology patient's pain should be considered an essential part of the management of cancer.
- Paediatric pain management has been recognized as inadequate.
- Research has shown that unrecognised pain can become established, severe and difficult to control.
- Children often have difficulty in expressing their pain.

AIM

- The purpose of this study was, to determine if the pain management at SBAH Paediatric oncology Unit is sufficient/ successful.
- Success means that the patients experience no or minimal pain.

METHOD AND SAMPLE SIZE

- Prospective observational descriptive study.
- All patients in the paediatric oncology Unit, who gave assent and whose parents were available to sign consent.
- A questionnaire, based on Varni and Thompson's Paediatric Pain Questionnaire was used, incorporating a visual pain scale and a body map.*
- Diagnosis and treatment was taken into consideration.
- When pain management was found to be inadequate, the physician responsible for the child's care was notified.

*<http://www.painresearch.utah.edu/cancerpain/ch14.html>, www.dbh.nhs.uk, Treadwell MJ, International Journal for Quality Health Care 2002;14-1; p39-47

RESULTS

- Six of the twenty seven children participating in the study experience mild to moderate pain,
- Twenty one patients experienced no pain (79%).
- Three boys and three girls experienced pain.
- The diagnosis of the children who experience
 - Neuroblastoma n=2
 - Retinoblastoma n=2,
 - Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia n=1
 - Undiagnosed abdominal mass n=1 .

FURTHER FINDINGS

- Two of the six children experiencing pain were new admissions.
- A prescription was incorrectly filled out; prescription timing was incorrect.
- Constipation was expressed as pain by two children.
- Procedures such as changing of dressings and insertion of feeding tube resulted in patients indicating mild to moderate pain.

DISCUSSION

- The children thoroughly enjoyed colouring in their body map and participating in their management.
- The information obtained in this study indicated that the pain control in the majority of patients is adequate.
- New admissions and young children with neuroblastoma and retinoblastoma require more effective pain control and attention should be paid to procedural pain.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- New admissions and young children with neuroblastoma and retinoblastoma require more effective pain control.
- Patients undergoing invasive procedures should be given additional analgesia.
- Care should be taken to ensure that timing and dosing of medication prescribed is correct.
- Paediatric Pain Questionnaire incorporating a visual pain scale and a body map can be used to evaluate pain in this group of patients.

QUESTIONS