

P451

P451 - Clinical nurses' understanding of the role of Clinical Research Nurse in the renal unit

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Background:

Modern-day conduct of clinical research/trials requires a dedicated staff. Clinical Research Nurses (CRNs) have been recognised as pivotal to the success of research, where familiar clinical nursing responsibilities are combined with research protocols and governance in conducting and managing all aspects of clinical research/trials. CRN's popularity as a career option for nurses is increasing, however its role remains widely misunderstood. Information concerning the perception of clinical nurses regarding the role of CRN is limited.

Over the years, our unit has been participating in a large number of clinical research/trials, requiring collaboration with clinical nurses. This presents an opportunity to consider the clinical nurses' perception of the role of CRN in the renal department.

Aim:

This study aims to investigate the understanding of clinical nurses of the role of CRN in the renal department and explore opportunities to improve working relationships.

Methods:

A Likert scale questionnaire was distributed with a purposive sample of clinical nurses in the renal department of a tertiary hospital. Questionnaires were collected, and responses were analysed using Descriptive Analysis.

Results:

A total of 15 clinical nurses were selected, consisting of 6 (40%) Band 5, 4 (27%) both for Band 6 and 7 and 1 (6%) Band 8. Respondents came from different clinical settings: 7 (46%) from the renal ward and 4 (27%) each, from main dialysis unit and renal outpatient department (ROPD).

The results showed that only 6 (40%) clinical nurses said that CRNs were visible in their workplace while 9 (60%) said that CRNs were either never or rarely visible. Less than half (47%) were aware of research/trials being conducted in the department. This may be due to only 4 (26.7%) having information about a research/trial disseminated to them. Six (40%) either misunderstood or had no idea of the role of the CRN, while 9 (60%) had a clear understanding.

Eleven (73%) clinical nurses believed in the impact of research/trials on their patients and department. Thirteen (86.7%) said that research/trials are beneficial to patients while 2 (13.3%) were uncertain. This

explains why the majority or 12 (80%) of clinical nurses will refer their patients to CRNs. Fourteen (93.3%) clinical nurses will encourage their patients to participate in research/trials and only 1 (6.67%) was not sure.

Potential issues were identified, but the majority of clinical nurses did not believe that CRNs and research interrupts patient care and work flow, adds to workload, or compromises patient safety. However, 10 (67%) agreed that communication between the CRNs and clinical nurses is lacking (Figure 1). In addressing these issues, clinical nurses acknowledged that good communication, timely coordination, combining clinical-research activities and integration of CRNs with clinical nurses is the best way forward (Figure 2).

Conclusion:

This study confirms that the CRN's role remains unclear to most clinical nurses. Developing an approach to address this issue to bridge the gap between these two important nursing specialities is pivotal. Therefore, better understanding of each other's roles will improve working relationships and can contribute significantly to the success of clinical research/trials.