

The Use of the MedCalm System with Anxious Patients in Behavioral Health Inpatient Units-A Pilot Study

Behavioral Health Nursing –B Evans, DNP, RN APN, PMHCNS; P. Hoppe, BSN, RN; H. Smith, BSN, RN, D. DeCarolis, BSN, RN, ACRN; Pat Bennett, BSN, RNC

What is MedCalm?

MedCalm System is a designed to calm, comfort and lessen pain as well as promote wellness and positive patient outcomes

Wireless Headphones are used with a custom built transmitter. Select therapeutic musical CDs are used to provide a calming, soothing event for anxious,

Acknowledgement

This project was funded by a grant from the Bergen Regional Medical Center Foundation. The project staff gratefully acknowledge support for this project

Objectives

Patients will have decreased anxiety/depression following the use of the MedCalm system.

Patients will identify a decrease in anxiety within 30 minutes following the use of the MedCalm System

Unit Data will reflect a decrease in the number of Team20/Dr. Strong episodes

Zung Depression inventory will identify a decrease in scores.

Methods

Patients who are having moderate to severe anxiety will be identified by staff or self referral for use of the MedCalm System

Patient will complete the Zung Anxiety Scale pre and post use of the MedCalm System.

Pre and Post Pulse and Blood Pressure are recorded

Use of the MedCalm System can last up to 60 minutes.

Results are documented

Patient Comment:

"To Whom it May Concern

I am writing this letter to speak about the MedCalm machine. One day my anxiety was high when a nurse introduced the MedCalm instead of taking medication. This technique seemed (sic) funny at first but I did anyhow. After using it I did notice a substantial difference in my mood. I felt rested, calm and decided that I know (sic) longer needed the medication at the time. I have had the ability to used the machine several times since. I would recommend this process for anyone who suffers from anxiety and other mental health illnesses as I do. The MedCalm is a way to help with mental health disorders." K.A.

Results

Twenty patients pilot tested the Med Calm System on 4 Behavioral Health Inpatient units between March and November of 2010. Self reports on the Zung Anxiety Scale showed a decrease in nervousness and anxiety, a decrease in fearfulness, an increase in feeling that everything is alright and in the ability to breathe in and out easily. The median age of the participants was 29 years (range was 22-55yrs).

There was no noticeable change in diastolic blood pressure readings pre/post use of the Med Calm. A 7 point median increase in the diastolic was noted post use.

There was a 5 point reduction in the median pulse rate post use of the Med Calm system.

Conclusion

This small study reinforced the work in previous studies that music can be effective in the reduction of anxiety, fear and nervousness as well as increase a sense of calm and easy breathing in the anxious patient. Further, the ease of implementation makes it applicable in a variety of behavioral health settings. This intervention supports the nursing philosophy of holistic and person-centered care. The small sample size limits generalizability of the findings but does reinforce previous related studies.

References

- McCaffrey, R. (2008). *Music listening its effects in creating a healing environment*. Journal of Psychosocial Nursing. 46:10. 39-44
- Gerdner, L. (1997). *An individualized music intervention for agitation*. Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association. 3:177. 177-184
- Helmes, E. and Wiancko, D.C. (2006). *Effects of music in reducing disruptive behavior n a general hospital*. Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association. 12:37. 37-44
- Nilsson, U. (2008). *The anxiety and pain reducing effects of music interventions: a systematic review*. Association of Operating Room Nurses Journal. 87:4. 780-807.

