Improving Patient Safety: Acupuncture Therapy Administered in the Rehabilitation Department

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Abstract

Background: Therapies that combine Chinese and western medicine is applied particularly often on patients in rehabilitation departments to reduce disease and illness recovery times. Acupuncture (fine needle piercing) is a widely applied traditional Chinese therapeutic approach. However, accidents including leaving needles in the patient’s body and patient fainting due to carelessness or inadequate nursing training have raised concerns about the efficacy of acupuncture.

Purpose: This article was written to recommend ways to improve the safety of acupuncture applied to patients in rehabilitation departments.

Resolution: The authors developed standard operating procedures, nursing records, double-checking requirements, and on-the-job training courses.

Result: After implementation of recommended resolutions, nursing staff cognition rose from 9.6 (63.8%) to 14.5 points (96.6%); the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) nursing skill accuracy rate rose from 93 (58.1%) to 144 points (90.0%); and accident incidents fell from 6 (0.9%; 2008.1-2009.1) to 0 (2009.4.1-4.30).

Conclusion: Implementing resolution recommendations effectively enhance patient safety.

Key Words: filiform needle, acupuncture, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) nursing, patient safety, traditional Chinese medicine and western medicine.