

Abstract

Original Article

Exploring the Human Emotion of Feeling Cared for During Hospitalization

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Abstract

Background: Previously we reported study results exploring the emotion of feeling cared for in workplace employees. This project extends that work exploring feeling cared for from the perspective of stroke patients and families. Joanne Duffy's Quality Caring Model focuses on building caring relationships and fostering the emotion of feeling cared for. When people feel cared for they are more likely to engage in health-promoting activities.

Objective: The objective of this study was to explore behaviors that stimulate feeling cared for during hospitalization.

Methodology: An open-ended question survey was designed, validated, and administered electronically or telephonically (per subject preference) within 3 months of discharge from the hospital. Data was analyzed using thematic content analysis.

Conclusion: Telephonic contact was attempted in 74 patient/families; 13 could not be reached, 61 were offered the survey, 22 (36%), (17 patients, 5 family) completed the survey (7 English, 15 Spanish speaking). Two investigators analyzed the data; themes were derived inductively achieving 100% consensus for: Care with competence (knowledge and skills), care with information/involvement, and care for personhood. No difference was found between patients and families. Spanish responses uniquely conveyed the importance of affection within a caring manner: "Me hablaban y me consentian" [they talked to me and pampered me]. "Me tocaban Los hombros y me daban palmadas" [they touched my shoulder and patted me]. "Me trataban con cariño" [they treated me with love].

Significance: These preliminary findings provide insight into behaviors which elicit the human emotion of feeling cared for stroke patients and their families. Promoting these caring behaviors amongst those who provide care for stroke patients has the potential to facilitate timely discharge, improve the healing environment, optimize the patient experience and facilitate healing.

Keywords: Empathy, compassion, caring, patient satisfaction, research, theory, stroke