

DEVELOPMENT OF A TELEPHONE TRIAGE GUIDELINE IN THE KOREAN PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY & ONCOLOGY UNIT

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Background: The telephone triage of patients with childhood cancer symptom comprises a large proportion of nursing activities in inpatient oncology settings. Providing a precise and consistent consultation decreases cost of patients by diminishing emergency visit, and enhances a quality of life due to the effective symptom management. Nurses in pediatric oncology are often the resource at the other end of the phone call. In the Korean inpatient oncology setting, average daytime nurses are composed of 12 nurses, who could provide various guidance without the evidence-based guideline for symptom consultation. These nurses can find themselves dealing with complex and sometimes critical patient issues over the telephone with parents of children with cancer. Uncertainty about the most appropriate advice and direction to give parents, as well as concerns regarding the accountability and potential liability for the advice given, contributes to work-related stress and concerns about best practice in an already stressful work environment. The issue arises, therefore, as to whether using the evidence-based telephone triage practices can provide opportunities for improvements in the care of pediatric oncology patients or whether this standardization needs to be balanced with the intuitive knowledge and experience of the nurses involved.

Hypothesis:

- After the application of the triage guideline, the satisfaction rate of caregivers of children with cancer can be enhanced.
- After application of the triage guideline, satisfaction rate of medical team and confidence on symptom consultation can be enhanced.

Method:

- 1) By prioritizing frequently asked symptoms, we collected the main 6 symptoms from March, 2016 to June, 2016. The triage process should be developed by physic and nurses collaboratively to ensure they are not unrealistic for the practice setting or patient population
- 2) A guideline has applied from August, 2015 to November, 2015.
- 3) The satisfaction rate on symptom consultation has evaluated from 30 caregivers of children with cancers receiving symptom consultation and 26 nurses on giving consultation in December, 2015.

Results: 6 multi frequency symptoms identified in this development research are fever, pain, nausea/vomiting, flu-symptom, bleeding sign, and constipation. The items of guideline have composed of general assessment methods, high-risk factors, explanation and education to caregivers. A guideline has distributed to inpatient clinic for outpatient nurses to utilize it conveniently. As results of analyzing satisfaction rate, after 3 months of application, guidance satisfaction has enhanced from 3.6 to 4.3, and medical team satisfaction has enhanced from 3.1 to 4.2. This process showed improvement of the satisfaction in the caregivers of children with cancers as well as the nurse involved in their care.