Nurse Driven Early Mobility in the Intensive Care Unit: Mobility Protocol and a Designated Mobility Champion

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Background
Decreased mobility can lead to health issues such as: metabolic disturbances, neuromuscular dysfunction, pressure injuries, hospital-acquired pneumonia, and delirium
Many patients discharged from ICU face lingering disabilities and increased mortality rate following discharge
Nurse-driven early mobility has been shown to decrease adverse effects of ICU admission, are safe and feasible, and give nurses greater autonomy in planning mobility interventions

Objectives
To address staff concerns on lack of mobilization in the ICU, the following goals were identified:
Address activity orders and mobility status at interdisciplinary rounds
Increase patient out-of-bed mobility from 35% to 50% per Care Connect flowsheets

Barriers
Identified:
Resources (staff, Geri-chairs, assistive devices, lack of off shift PT)
Bedrest orders, patient condition
Passive ROM team education/engagement

Unanticipated:
Increase in COVID-19 patients not fitting eligibility criteria for mobility (extended periods of proning required)

Implementation
Mobility Protocol:
Nurse-driven mobility protocol adapted from valid/reliable tools
Mobility Champion:
Patient care tech who completed additional education with PT/OT
Attends ICU interdisciplinary rounds 3 days/week
Assists staff in getting patient out of bed (OOB) and ambulating in hall when patient is able
OOB not feasible, champion assists with range of motion exercises

Recommendations
Implement for all ICU patients
Use adapted mobility tool during interdisciplinary rounds to determine patient eligibility and determine level of assistance
Education addressing importance of early progressive mobility, team member role, documentation, communication, patient education

Outcomes
Initial
Goal of 50% impacted by acuity during COVID pandemic
Staff recommends continuing use of mobility champion
Current
Mobility champion extended on all acute inpatients units
Champion, PT, nursing determine who mobilizes and their goal
Adapted mobility tool still in use
Since July, mobility champion assisted with 300+ OOB ambulations

References