Abstract

Introduction:
- Preventing Abusive Head Trauma: A Hospital-Wide Quality Improvement Study

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Methods:
- Conducted at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children
- Retrospective chart review with 156 nurses across 6 departments
- Three step educational intervention designed by the NCBS
- Knowledge and understanding of SBS/AHT was assessed before and after training

Results:
- Nurses demonstrated an increase in SBS/AHT knowledge after the educational intervention
- Nurses who had previous NCBS training at any point in their career performed better on the initial assessment than nurses who had never received training

Conclusions:
- NCBS training improved nurses’ education and understanding of SBS/AHT in both short and long term
- Nurses reported increased confidence instructing patients and caregivers about its associated dangers and risks

Shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) results from the violent shaking of an infant or a child’s head. Most commonly results in subdural hematoma or hematoma due to tearing of the bridging veins. National studies indicate SBS/AHT causes injuries to roughly 4,000 infants a year, however roughly 30-40% of cases are missed at medical institutions. Of the cases identified, roughly 18-25% of babies who are shaken and hospitalized die, and approximately 80% of surviving infants suffer from significant neurological disabilities and lifelong cognitive and neural impairment. In addition to the possible lifelong adverse health effects of SBS/AHT, childhood head injuries create large financial burdens.

In 2008, the estimated economic burden stemming from fatal and nonfatal child maltreatment in the US was approximately $24 billion. Certain children are at increased risk of becoming a victim of SBS/AHT. Risk factors include single parent homes, untrained male caregivers, and low socioeconomic areas.

St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children (SCHC) is one of the poorest congressional districts in the United States. In 2018 alone, nearly 28% of Philadelphia’s abuse cases occurred in Philadelphia county. Nursing staff at SCHC noticed a significant rise in SBS/AHT injuries presenting at our institution in 2018. The goal of this study is to educate nurses regarding SBS/AHT, to determine whether our education is beneficial in the short and long term, and ultimately to improve caregiver education by nurses with the end goal of reducing SBS/AHT incidence and recurrence rates at SCHC.