Using National Early Warning Score (NEWS) in Tampere University hospital

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Background

The National Early Warning Score (NEWS), published in the United Kingdom, helps to recognize the deterioration of patients with an acute illness. The NEWS is based on physiological measurements with a scoring system.

Tampere University Hospital (Tays) started using NEWS in 2014. Initially NEWS was used as a pilot study on two wards. Based on the experiences on those wards, other wards started using it. After this, NEWS was also introduced as one of the MET (Medical Emergency Team) alarm criteria (NEWS $\geq$ 7).

Material and methods

In 2018 we conducted an electronic survey about the NEWS in Tampere University Hospital for the nursing staff. The link to the survey was mailed via the head nurses and it was in our hospital internal website in January 2018. The survey included structured and open questions about using the NEWS.

Purpose of the survey was to find out how the NEWS is used in our hospital and how the information about the NEWS are developed in monitoring of the patients. Also to the kind of training needed for using the NEWS was inquired.

Results

Out of the 256 answers, 80 percent were nurses. The main result was that using the NEWS was varying. Of the respondents, 24 percent used the NEWS in all the patients and 42 percent used it with patients with acute illness.

Information from the NEWS helps the nurses in recognizing changes in patient's condition. The reason that NEWS was not used (35 % of respondents) was that they were not familiar with the NEWS or it was not used on their ward.

Conclusions

Our survey highlights the NEWS as a great tool in monitoring and predicting changes in patient's condition. NEWS is a structured model of measuring physiological measurements, assisting in prioritizing nurse's work and gives continual information about the patient's condition.

A technological application supports the use of the NEWS. If the meaning of or the information gained from the NEWS is not understood, it precludes its use. Almost 42 percent of the respondents wish to receive extra training in using the NEWS even better.

References
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