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Addressing Gaps in Oncology Nurses' Knowledge and Comfort with CAM: The Role of the GRN

NYU Langone Medical Center

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FORUM PRESENTERS
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Objectives:

- Discuss the implementation of Geriatric Resource Nurses (GRNs) in the specialty of oncology.
- Discuss how GRNs can be empowered to identify areas for practice improvement.
- Discuss how GRN collaboration across specialty areas can benefit patient care as well as staff knowledge.

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Introduction:

- Delirium is a common geriatric condition contributing to falls, pressure injuries and other adverse events.
- Oncology patients are at high risk for developing delirium related to disease state.
- Therefore, the older adult in oncology is at heightened risk for delirium.
- Inpatient oncology patients were not routinely assessed for the presence of delirium.

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Background: 16 East/BMT

- 27 bed adult acute care hematology, oncology, bone marrow transplant unit at NYULMC
 - Patient population:
 - Age ranges from young adult to older adult
 - Various stages of illness from initial diagnoses to end of life and inpatient hospice care
 - GRN presence on unit

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Background: Alert Team

- 15 RN team, including 3 GRNs
- Job Responsibilities:
 - Proactive rounding
 - Clinical Resource/Expert
 - Monitor patients and educate bedside RNs to recognize signs of clinical deterioration
 - Facilitates emergency situations

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Identifying a Problem:

- GRNs were asked to implement a quality improvement initiative on their units.
- Oncology RNs and Alert Team RNs identified that hospitalized older adult oncology patients were not routinely screened for delirium.
- **Goal: Deploy GRNs to educate oncology nursing staff on delirium, the CAM tool, and care of patients identified as CAM positive.**

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Methods:

- Education sessions were provided by GRNs in both formal and informal settings on delirium and the CAM assessment.
 - Education was presented at Unit Practice Council
 - Education presented via 1:1 sessions with all nurses
 - GRNs available as bedside consults
 - Resource binder created and present on unit at all times

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Discussion and Next Steps:

- Oncology nurses often focus on the special population that is the cancer patient and do not focus on the specific needs of the older adult cancer patient.
- Next Steps:
 - Further Chart Audits
 - Continued Education
 - Growing GRN presence in oncology

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