Family-centred Care of Children and Young People in the Acute Hospital Setting: A Concept Analysis

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Introduction/Background

• Family-centred care (FCC) has become a central tenet of children's nursing in the Western world over several decades. It is widely supported by children's nurses as the preferred model of care within which to deliver children's nursing care (Franck & Callery, 2004; Murphy & Fealy, 2007; Shields et al, 2007; Coyne et al, 2011; Tallon et al, 2016; Coats, 2018).
• Although it is a term used frequently, there is no single internationally accepted definition for FCC, rather different understandings of the concept have developed & a list of elements are described in the literature.
• There is a lack of clarity about its meaning among nurses (Murphy & Fealy, 2007; Coyne et al, 2011; Feeg et al, 2016; Coats, 2018).
• As a result of this lack of clarity, FCC is not always implemented effectively or with consistency (Foster et al, 2010; Coyne et al, 2011; Smith et al, 2014; Feeg et al, 2016; Smith et al, 2017; Coats, 2018).
• A lack of clarity about the operational meaning may lead to inconsistencies in how care is delivered & uncertainty for families & staff.
• While children's nurses endorse the concept of FCC, implementation of its principles in practice is more problematic (Foster et al, 2010; Coyne et al, 2011).

Data Collection

A robust search strategy was designed to ensure the sample of literature was rigorously selected, represented the literature fairly and minimised researcher bias. The search results are outlined on the Prisma Flow Diagram below.

Data Analysis

• The aim of data analysis is to identify a consensus in the literature (Rodgers, 2000).
• Surrogate terms, related concepts, attributes, antecedents & consequences of the concept being analysed were examined.
• Data was examined for areas of agreement/disagreement, changes over time & emerging trends which may indicate a need for further research.
• Each article was read and re-read to identify the data related to each of the key categories.
• Data extraction records were compiled for all articles.

Findings

• FCC enhances the hospital experience for children & parents and improves their well-being (Dunst & Trevette, 2009; Shields et al, 2012; Coyne, 2013).
• There is a lack of attention to cultural & societal changes, thus our understanding of FCC across culturally diverse settings is limited (Dennis et al, 2016).
• Developments in the delivery of acute hospital care = shorter length of stay, increased patient throughput and increased patient acuity.
• These factors reduce opportunities for developing trusting relationships between families and nurses, & pose challenges to effective & consistent implementation of FCC.
• While children’s nurses have been applying some elements of FCC to their practice for decades, the concept continues to evolve.

Implications for Research & Practice

• The findings provide a starting point from which further research can be conducted.
• Explore FCC from the child’s & parents’ perspectives, reflecting cultural diversity & social norms.
• Examine the outcomes of FCC for the child & family.
• The cost to families of having the responsibility of caring for their child at home following a day-case procedure or early discharge is not yet known.
• Further research must examine what FCC means for families, in light of the current social context & changing family configurations.

References


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