Intensive Care Unit Nurse Workflow During Shift Change Prior to the Introduction of a Critical Care Clinical Information System

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Continuity of Care in ICUs

Rapid changes in:
- Patient status
- Care plans

Multidisciplinary Teamwork

Informational continuity
- Between roles
- Within roles
Information
- Quality?
- Availability?

Beneficial for Patient Care?
‘Workflow’ measures
WOMBAT: Work Observation Method By Activity Timing

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‘Workflow’ measures

Time spent on:

- Patient care
- Professional Communication
- Documentation
- Medication
- In transit
- Administration
- Supervision
- Social
- Pager
Nurse work at shift change
Paper charting
Morning

Professional Communication
Documentation
Patient care

Graph showing percent time from 6:30 to 8:00.
Evening

Professional Communication
Documentation
Patient care
Nurse work at shift change
Paper charting

Possible Implications:
Sense of ‘Feeling Behind’
High rate of ICU staff turnover
Conclusions

• Major challenge for ICU care providers: maintaining informational continuity
• WOMBAT method shows how nurses spend their time around shift change
• ICU nurses spend significantly more time on information sharing tasks around shift change
Future Directions

Evaluation of clinical information systems:

Informational continuity is challenged:
Shift change
Funding Support

- Alberta Health Services
- CIHR IRSC

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