18-20 July 2011
Environmental factors that affect communication for patients with a communication disability in acute hospital stroke units: A qualitative metasynthesis

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What’s the size of the problem?

- 60/68 (88%) had a communication related impairment e.g. hearing, vision, speech, language or cognitive communicative impairment (O’Halloran, Worrall and Hickson, 2009).

- 33/65 (51%) had difficulty communicating their healthcare needs e.g. understanding their diagnosis, asking questions, calling for a nurse (O’Halloran, Worrall and Hickson, in press).
How can we make communicating easier?
International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)

“Environmental Factors make up the physical, social, attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives. These factors are external to individuals and can have a positive or negative influence on the individual’s performance…” (WHO, 2001, p.16)
What environmental factors (ICF) influence a patient’s ability to communicate in acute hospital stroke units?
3 qualitative studies

• The environmental factors that influence communication from the perspectives of:
  1. Stroke patients with communication impairments (Grohn, 2008)
  2. Healthcare providers who work in acute stroke units (Martin et al, 2008)
  3. An observer, directly observing communication between patients and healthcare providers in acute stroke units (O’Halloran et al, 2011).
A qualitative metasynthesis

• Focus on the results of each of 3 studies and use qualitative methods to synthesise those findings.

• Through this synthesis, we hoped we may get:
  – A new more complete interpretation of the findings
  – A comprehensive list of environmental factors
Qualitative metasynthesis: Procedure

1. Read articles
2. Analyze articles
3. Synthesize results
4. Write up findings
Environmental factors that influence communication

**Healthcare Providers**
- Knowledge
- Communication skills
- Attitude
- Experience
- Individual Characteristics

**Stroke unit structure and processes**
- Opportunities for communication
- Family
- Aids and equipment
- Physical environment
- Opportunities for learning

**Systems, policies and procedures**
Working towards a communicatively accessible healthcare environment…….
More information.....

O’Halloran, Grohn and Worrall (in press). Environmental factors that influence communication for patients with a communication disability in acute hospital stroke unit: A qualitative metasynthesis. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*

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Thank You