

Supporting Patient Engagement and Self-Management with Trust and Selfies

Marlene A. Varga MSc, Kirstin Hubert & Catherine Finlayson



Covenant Health, Edmonton, Alberta (Abstract #0018)
Canadian Association of Wound Care Conference 2016

Aim

To share the story of how developing a trusting relationship, providing consistent evidence-based care and engaging the person with a wound and her family can positively affect the journey of physical healing, emotional healing and self managed care.

Method

The wound care nurse met Kirstin in early March of 2016 when she presented with limb-threatening full thickness infected heel ulcers. Kirstin is a 38 year old married, mother of 2 with Type 1 diabetes, neuropathy, retinopathy and is awaiting a pancreas transplant. This partnership was facilitated by effective communication, meeting the patient where she was at and encouraging her to talk about her experiences of illness.

The wound care nurse, in partnership with the patient and family identified goals to improve and personalize the patient experience, identified risk factors, created clear lines of communication, and explored the coping skills, social support and psychological support with the patient (International Best Practice Statement 2016). During care visits, the patient took "selfie" photos of her wounds to document the story of her journey to engage her in self care.

Findings

This model of interactive patient care engaged and empowered the patient to manage her health status and take some control over her disease. The collages of pictures of her wounds, her family, her caregivers created a pathway to memories, thoughts and feelings that enabled us to explore, discover, clarify and make connections to the present moment (Hawkins and Lindsay 2006). This collection of visual text also gave access to concerns, feelings and perceptions that may have not shown up in conversation.

Engaging patients through photography supported the person's understanding of evidence-based wound care practices and prevention of further trauma. The person with the wound also used these photos to create collages and stories to re-create her meaning of illness. This strategy aided in the disclosure of feelings of guilt, despair, hope and positive future thinking.

Applications

This strategy may motivate clinicians to take their clinical care practice and interpersonal efforts with patients and families to the next level. This care experience strengthened the patients' determinants of her health care needs, improved her self-efficacy and self-care efforts to continue to focus on prevention strategies independently.

Visual Text Collages



Examples



References

- Hawkins, J. and Lindsay, E. 2006. We listen but do we hear? The importance of patient stories. *BJCN* September, pp. S6-S14.
- International Best Practice Statement: Optimizing patient involvement in wound management. *Wounds International* 2016.
- Wang, S. et al. 2016. Patient perception of wound photography. *International Wound Journal* 13 (3), pp. 326-330.

Conclusion

Patient centered care that engages patients and families during healthcare delivery and transition of care was a crucial step to not only achieving wound closure but also emotional disclosure to support the psychosocial aspects of wound healing.