Implementation of ICU Recovery Groups to Reduce the Burden of Post-Intensive Care Syndrome

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Background

- Post-Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS) consists of multidimensional cognitive, physical, and mental health impairments occurring in the months to years following critical illness.
- PICS-Family (PICS-F) is the cluster of anxiety and depressive complications experienced by family members of ICU survivors.
- Peer support has been identified as a novel strategy to mitigate PICS and PICS-F.

Aims

1. Implement a peer support group for patients and family members who are currently experiencing or have experienced critical illness.
2. Improve the recovery of critical care survivors and accelerate the progress of knowledge about recovery for both patients and family members.

Methods

- Nashville Veterans Affairs Medical Center participates in the multi-site THRIVE Collaborative
- Formed interprofessional core team
- Constructed detailed implementation plan
- Held open house to introduce initiative goals and needs to VAMC executive leadership, faculty, and staff
- ICU Recovery Group weekly sessions initiated October 2016
  - Open to family members and survivors
  - Free-flow, unstructured format
  - Led by social worker and chaplain
  - ICU nurse present for clinical insight, if needed
  - Resources provided, if desired
  - Surveys distributed to evaluate group benefit

Quantitative Findings

- 21 ICU Recovery Group sessions offered October 2016 – April 2017
  - n=47 participants, median 3 per session (min=1, max=6)
  - n=44 family members of active ICU patients
  - n=3 ICU survivors
  - n=30 anonymous support person evaluations completed (68% response rate)
- Majority of evaluation participants reported positive views of ICU Recovery Group:
  - 90% learned from others
  - 93% felt emotionally supported
  - 83% understand common situations related to prolonged ICU stay

Conclusions

- ICU Recovery Group appears helpful in increasing family member support.
- Ideal participant number is 4-6 per session.
- Group participation not inhibited with attendance by both ICU survivors and family members/friends.

Next Steps

- Conduct PDSA cycles to enhance participation by ICU patients who have survived critical illness.
- Request ICU survivor participant feedback to determine usefulness of ICU Recovery Group.
- Conduct research to determine effectiveness of ICU Recovery Group in influencing morbidities associated with PICS and PICS-F.