

# Creating a Healing Environment in the ICU

*presented by*

Eileen Phillips, RN, MSN, NE-BC

Nurse Manager ICU & SDU

# Environment in the ICU

- The concept of environmental influences on healing has been known since Florence Nightingale, a nursing leader, who cared for soldiers in the Crimean War (1854-1856).
- Recent studies have supported Nightingale's practices from a century ago.
- The environment plays a significant role in the overall healthcare experience & healing process.



# Environment even today

With the many advancements that have been attained in Biomedical equipment & monitoring in critical care units, the same issues considered by Nightingale are the same today.

- Air quality
- Color
- Light
- View
- Noise

# Research

Shows that patients experience positive outcomes when the environment incorporates:

- Natural light
- Elements of nature
- Peaceful colors
- Pleasant views
- Pleasing sounds



# More Research

The physiological affects of stress negatively affect patients' ability to heal. Creating physical environments that supports families' & patients' psychological well being can produce a positive impact:

- On therapeutic outcomes
- Reduce stressors
- Improve staff performance & morale

# Color in the Environment

- Color evokes emotional responses that produce feelings of serenity or agitation that can aggravate or alleviate stress
- Color can also affect an individual's emotional state, inducing cheerfulness, agitation or calming



# The Color Blue

Common associations with blue:

- Relaxation
- Serenity
- Loyalty
- Calming
- Healing
- Nature Symbol: the sky & the ocean

# The Society of Critical Care Medicine

- Recommends using calming colors to promote rest in the critical care units.
- Blues, greens & violet have healing and calming influences & are stress reducing colors.



# Environmental Landscape

“That they (patients) should be able, without raising themselves or turning in bed, to see a window from their beds, to see sky and sunlight at least, if you can show them nothing else, I assert to be, if not of the very first importance for recovery, at least something very near to it.”

*Taken from Notes on Nursing by Florence Nightingale*

# A Study from Ulrich (1984)

Suggesting that changing the healthcare landscape:

- Reduces stress
- Has a positive effect on medical outcomes
- Including speed of recovery
- Reductions in length of stay & cost



# ***Virtual Window for Healthcare Facilities (Turner 2001)***

Ernesto Machado's experience during his father's hospitalization inspired him to develop a product to stimulate a window view.

- Actually looks like a window
- It can be installed in the wall or ceiling
- Brings the healing power of nature & water into the stressful hospital environment.

# Art for Healing

- Artwork in patient rooms should produce a restful, calm feeling for patients & families.
- A peaceful scene is superlative inducing feelings of calm & safety.
- Landmark study on the affect of nature & abstract pictures on patients recovering from open heart surgery, found that patients who viewed the nature scenes had decreased LOS, had lower blood pressures & required less pain medication. (Ulrich, et al 1993).



# Why choose curtains to spend capital dollars?

- Staff morale/employee engagement
- Unit Council investigating aesthetic changes
- Patient Satisfaction low in 'comfort of room' scores.

# ICU Report Card

- Created by Unit Council due to lack of Press Ganey surveys returned to the ICU
- In April, the survey was changed to include the question, “How did the room décor (curtains, room size, etc) add to your comfort level?” We handed them to every family on admission and they could either drop them in a box or mail them back.
- From May to Sept we had an n=26 and using the 5 point Likert scale our score was 119 out of 130 possible or 91.54%



# Before Sereneview



# After Sereneview





# Peaceful, relaxing view while visiting in the ICU.





**You can go to the mountains.**





# To the coast of Ireland.





# Perhaps to the Caribbean.





# Patients, Families and Staff Love the Curtains

