

Clinical implications of transferring patients during shift change

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BACKGROUND

Transferring patients during nurses' change of shift can lead to adverse events, delays in patient care and compromise the safety of patients. Furthermore, it creates a significant interruption for nurses.

PURPOSE

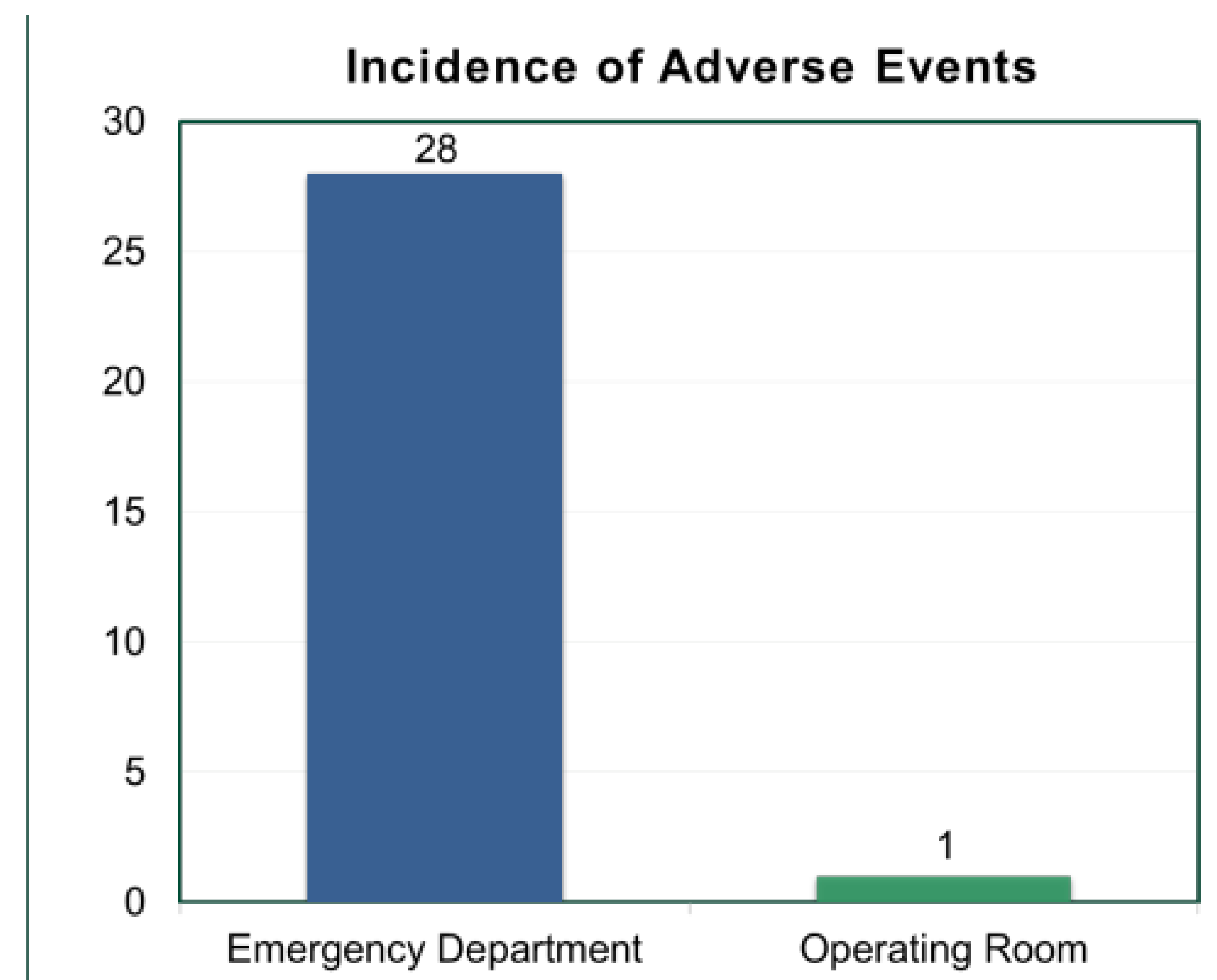
The purpose of this study is to identify adverse effects that may occur during the time patients are transferred during nurses' change of shift and introduce strategies to improve patient outcomes.

METHODS

Design: Systematic review of evidence based research articles reviewing effects on patients transferred during nurses' change of shift.

RESULTS

- Breakdown in communication
 - Two third of communication breakdown occurring during nurse handoff (Friesen et al., 2019).
- Delays in patient care
 - In one cited study, it was found that out of the 143 patients, 29 adverse events occurred: 57% adverse events occurred during nurses change of shift and 28 events were patients admitted from the emergency department (Diaz et al., 2018).



- Recorded effects on patient care:
 - Adverse events
 - Falls
 - Decreased patient satisfaction and frustration (Diaz et al., 2018)
- Recorded adverse effects on nursing staff:
 - Increased stress
 - Increased workload
 - Breakdown in communication
 - Burnout (Friesen et al., 2019)

CONCLUSION

A review of the literature shows that the incidences of adverse effects and delays in patient care and safety occurring are increased when patients are transferred at shift change.

The literature review also shows that there is a significant interruptions and implications on nursing staff when receiving patients at short change.

Implications for practice:

Reduce the number of adverse events during change of shifts promote better patient outcomes and increase patient safety,

Strategies to improve patient outcomes may include:

- Introducing a “blackout period”, in which a 45 minutes time period during change of shift where patients are not transferred.
- Better communication and coordination of care between hospital units.

REFERENCES

Diaz, J. M., Villafuerte, M. G., Wheeler, V., Wakim, N., & Sadule-Rios, N. (2018). Effect of change of shift admissions on patient outcomes. <https://scholarlycommons.baptisthealth.net/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4157&context=se-all-publications>

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