

Abstract

A Randomized trial of Web Based Educational Interventions in Implementing Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nutrition Support in the Critically Ill

Practice guidelines have become widely available through Internet technology, journals and textbooks, however, seldom have guidelines had any noticeable impact on clinical practice. “Best practice”, related to nutrition support has recently been summarized by a multidisciplinary panel led by research scientist Dr. Daren Heyland (Clinical Practice Guidelines). Contrasting what is actually being done (Heyland et al JPEN Feb 2003) with what should be done (as per the guidelines) highlights significant opportunities for improving practice.

Multifaceted strategies and interactive workshops have shown to change physician behavior and occasionally, healthcare outcomes, yet their impact has never been studied in the setting of nutrition support in the critically ill. The objective of this project is to compare the effectiveness of a multifaceted strategy and interactive workshop to passive dissemination of clinical practice guidelines for nutrition support in the critically ill.

Data will be collected before the implementation of the multifaceted strategy and interactive workshop, and again at 6 months. Dietitians will be asked to complete forms describing hospital, ICU characteristics and general nutrition support practice. Patient specific data will be collected retrospectively from the hospital charts and direct observation of patients. All patients cared for in participating ICUs on a particular date in the summer of 2003 will be entered into the study. Outcome measures include: each participant’s willingness to change prior to the intervention, nutrition support practice change and health care outcomes.

The opinion leader will achieve capacity to conduct the multifaceted strategies and interactive workshops by participating in a workshop prior to initiation of the study or via training by video-conferencing, email, and telephone conversation. The results of this study will enable allied health care professionals to choose more effective means of disseminating scientific information (clinical practice guidelines) as it relates to nutrition support in the critically ill patient.