

NURSING

The critically ill pediatric patient: inside and outside the Emergency room

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On May 10, 2024, within the framework of the XXVIII Meeting of the Spanish Society of Pediatric Emergency Medicine, a nursing round table took place entitled: “**The critically ill pediatric patient: inside and outside the Emergency room**”.

The aim of this round table was to provide a comprehensive overview of the care of critically ill children in various settings beyond the hospital emergency department. Three presentations were given by nurses working in a health center, a hospital emergency department, and a pediatric and neonatal critical care transport service. The day-to-day realities of caring for critically ill pediatric patients with the available resources were discussed.

The round table was moderated by María del Carmen Hermida Bouzas, the nursing supervisor of the unit at the Teresa Herrera Maternity Hospital in A Coruña.

The first presentation was given by Cristina Sanmartín Chapela, a pediatric nurse specialist who trained at the Teresa Herrera Maternity Hospital and currently works at the Health Center A Parda in Pontevedra. In her presentation, entitled “Organization and resources available for the critically ill child in primary care,” Cristina discussed the approach to critically ill children from the perspective of an urban health center. She identified three main factors as barriers to quality care for critically ill children in primary care:

1. The low number of actual emergencies seen.
2. Frequent turnover of personnel.
3. The limited resources available.

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The first two factors were identified as major barriers to the training of personnel involved in the emergency care of pediatric patients in this setting.

Next, María Inés Gómez Camafreita, a pediatric emergency nurse at the Teresa Herrera Maternity Hospital in A Coruña and a member of the organizing committee of the XXVIII Meeting of the SEUP, presented the second lecture, entitled “Nursing roles in the pediatric critical care ward”.

María Inés explained how, in recent years, her team implemented a work model in their pediatric emergency department (PED) based on workload distribution by roles in the stabilization room. This model, already established in other hospitals, was adapted to local characteristics and implemented through on-site simulation.

In the presentation, the current nursing work system in the stabilization room of her department was presented, describing three distinct nursing roles along with their defined functions, and the designated role for the auxiliary nursing care technician (TCAE, as abbreviated in Spanish). These roles include the respiratory nurse, circulatory nurse, and medication nurse, as well as the responsibilities fulfilled by the TCAE.

Finally, two specialist nurses in pediatrics from the SEM (Medical Emergency Service), Hospital San Joan de Déu de Barcelona, Montserrat Navarro Bolinches and Gema Tapia Serrano, presented their lecture entitled “Transport of pediatric and neonatal critically ill patients”, wherein they delineated the responsibilities undertaken by nurses within a pediatric out-of-hospital transport service. This service involves the transfer of patients between hospitals of varying care levels, as well as providing care at the street level.

In this presentation, it was emphasized how crucial it is to ensure maximum coordination and establish care circuits between different levels of healthcare and among hospitals. Such coordination is essential for ensuring the highest quality in the transportation of critically ill children.

After the three presentations, there was some time for discussion, where several nurses shared insights into the

realities of their respective departments, highlighting common issues faced by most PEDs regarding nursing staffing. However, due to time constraints, some questions remained unanswered during the session. The speakers subsequently addressed these inquiries via email to all participants who reached out to them.

In summary, the nursing session was outstanding, consistent with the overall quality of the XXVIII Annual Meeting, with excellent speakers and addressing a crucial topic. We all have much to learn and contribute based on our experiences and knowledge.