

Patient Satisfaction with Nurse Practitioners and Physicians in Multiple Sclerosis Centers

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Background

- Severe shortage of neurologists may impact the care of patients with multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Nurse Practitioners (NPs) have successfully filled the provider gaps with positive impacts on care outcomes.
- Patient satisfaction, often synonymous with quality of care, was rated similar or improved with NPs or a team (physician-NP) approach.
- Patient satisfaction with NPs and physicians working with Multiple Sclerosis patients have not been studied.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine patient satisfaction with physicians and nurse practitioners in Multiple Sclerosis Centers.

Client singularity

Client professional interaction

Satisfaction with care

Adaptation of Cox's Interaction Model of Client Health Behavior

Methods

- Cross-sectional pilot study (n=60)
- Sites: two MS Centers in the Long Island region of New York.
- Tools: Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire-18 and Visit Satisfaction Questionnaire-9
- All attributes of satisfaction were compared between the physician group and the NP group using non-parametric tests.
- The visit time and the allotted time and its relationship to satisfaction scores was also analyzed.

Results

- Patient satisfaction with both types of providers were high (VSQ9 av.-81).
- All attributes of satisfaction were equal for nurse practitioners and the physicians despite the differences in their educational preparation.
- Providers spent comparable amount of time with their patients (MD mean time=25minutes, NP mean time= 26minutes) (p=0.8).
- Encounter duration (more or less than 20 minutes) was a strong determinant of patient satisfaction (p=0.01).
- Higher satisfaction attributes noted with patients who carried the diagnosis for 10 or more years (p=0.01) or had the progressive type of MS (p=0.03).

Implications

- Patients in MS centers are equally satisfied with the care they receive from nurse practitioners and physicians.
- A collaborative team approach can improve access to care and patient outcomes.
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