

Assessment of Medication Administration Process in a Paediatric Ward: Observational Study

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Abstract

Children are more susceptible to medication errors than adults. Medication administration process is the last stage in the medication treatment process and most of the errors detected in this stage. Little research has been undertaken about medication errors in children in the Middle East countries. This study was aimed to evaluate how the paediatric nurses adhere to the medication administration policy and also to identify any medication preparation and administration errors or any risk factors. An observational, prospective study of medication administration process from when the nurses preparing patient medication until administration stage (May to August 2014) was conducted in Saudi Arabia. Twelve paediatric nurses serving 90 paediatric patients were observed. 456 drug administered doses were evaluated. Adherence rate was variable in 7 steps out of 16 steps. Patient allergy information, dose calculation, drug expiry date were the steps in medication administration with lowest adherence rates. 63 medication preparation and administration errors were identified with error rate 13.8% of medication administrations. No potentially life-threatening errors were witnessed. Few logistic and administrative factors were reported. The results showed that the medication administration policy and procedure need an urgent revision to be more sensible for nurses in practice. Nurses' knowledge and skills regarding to the medication administration process should be improved.