

Nurses' Management of Thai Children's Postoperative Pain: A Holistic Case study

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Abstract: Nurses, due to caring for children 24 hours a day, play a vital role in the management of children's postoperative pain. However, little is known, holistically, about how nurses manage children's postoperative pain, including interactions among fellow nurses, other healthcare professionals and caregivers. Thus, this study aimed to describe how nurses manage children's postoperative pain in the real-life context of a pediatric surgical intensive care unit and a pediatric surgical unit.

A descriptive case study was conducted using a multiple-case (holistic) design. The case study focused on how selected nurses managed Thai children's postoperative pain. Data were collected from multiple sources, including: 1) observations of nurses' pain management activities and interactions with physicians, children and family caregivers; 2) review of children's medical records, i.e. documents related to pain management policies, physicians' prescriptions, and nurses' pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions; and, 3) interviews with nurses, physicians and family caregivers.

Three nursing strategies used to manage children's postoperative pain found were: 1) analgesic administration; 2) providing alternative care or non-pharmacological interventions; and, 3) family caregiver involvement. The nurses' pain management model revealed nurses had interactions with physicians and caregivers that impacted the nurses' decisions regarding management of the children's postoperative pain. In addition, the nurses' patterns used in management of children's postoperative pain were identified and described. The findings imply the need for clinical practice guidelines, as well as an educational program for children's postoperative pain management.

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