

The impact of hospital orientation on anxiety level among hospitalized school age children

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Abstract

Hospitalization may cause anxiety and stress at any age. Fear of the unknown is always threatening. Children are often too young to understand what is happening or are afraid to ask questions, the best way to ease the stress of hospitalization is to ensure that the child has been well prepared for the hospital experience. The aims of the current study were to assess anxiety level among newly hospitalized school age children, to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of a hospital orientation on level of anxiety and depression of children. The current study utilized a quasi-experimental design. A convenient sample consisted of 60 school-age children was taken from the medicine wards in Cairo University Specialized Pediatric and Elmonera Hospital for Children, Cairo University. The required data were collected using sociodemographic sheet which developed by the research investigator and Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) which developed by Snaith and Zigmond (1994). The result of current study showed that all hospitalized children did not expose to any hospital orientation before or after admission. More than two thirds of the samples (66.7%) were male and 70% of children stated that nurses, physician and lab. investigation were the main sources of anxiety to hospitalized child. Most of children in the study group were anxious and depressed in pre test (before hospital orientation). There was a highly statistical significant difference between the total mean scores of anxiety and depression in the pre and post hospital orientation. The study concluded that hospital orientation was an important and effective

method in reducing anxiety of newly hospitalized school-age children. The study recommended that, hospital orientation should be provided to all newly admitted children especially school age children (as they always neglected and thought that they are old enough and independent from parents' point of view) to alleviate their level of anxiety and depression at hospital and to promote their adaptation to hospital experience and promote their health.

Key words: School age children, hospitalization, orientation, anxiety, stress and depression.