

Staff awareness concerning the existence and composition of the nutritional support team in an academic teaching hospital in Northern Germany

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Rationale

According to ESPEN terminology, a nutritional support team (NST) is defined as a multi-disciplinary team of physicians, dietitians, nurses and pharmacists that manages or supervises the provision of nutritional support. NSTs are established only in few German hospitals and the current situation is not sufficiently investigated. The main aim was to evaluate the in-house awareness of an established NST in a large hospital in Northern Germany.

Methods

Anonymous short survey of 151 randomly selected employees (80 nurses, 48 medical doctors, 23 other health professionals) in the Dietrich-Bonhoeffer-Klinikum Neubrandenburg, Mecklenburg Vorpommern, Germany (1100 beds). The ad-hoc surveys took place on 4 days during 17.10.-7.11.2019 on wards and in front of the cafeteria. A questionnaire adapted to the aims of the study was developed with predefined response options and open questions.

Staff assessment of the effect of nutritional therapy on the course of diseases

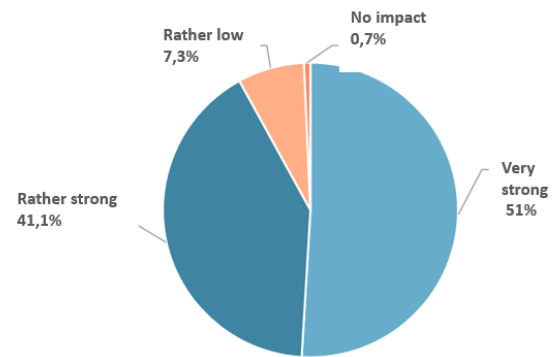


Figure 1: n=151 (very strong n=77, rather strong n=62, rather low n=11, no impact n=1)

Results

The NST was known to 72% (n=109) of staff members, with the highest awareness among nursing staff (86.3%), followed by physicians (56.3%) and other health professionals (56.5%). The NST awareness was lowest among those with the shortest professional experience (graduation 2011 and later, 42%, n=21/50).

Spontaneously asked for NST composition, the most frequently mentioned were dietitians (81%), followed by medical staff (65%), nurses (41%), diabetes assistants (22%), speech therapists (13%) and pharmacists (5%), whereas all groups were part of the NST. Overall, 92% (n=139/151) claimed that nutritional therapy affects the course of disease strongly, and 62% (n=94/151) wished to request nutritional medical advice often.

Tasks of the nutritional support team - spontaneously mentioned

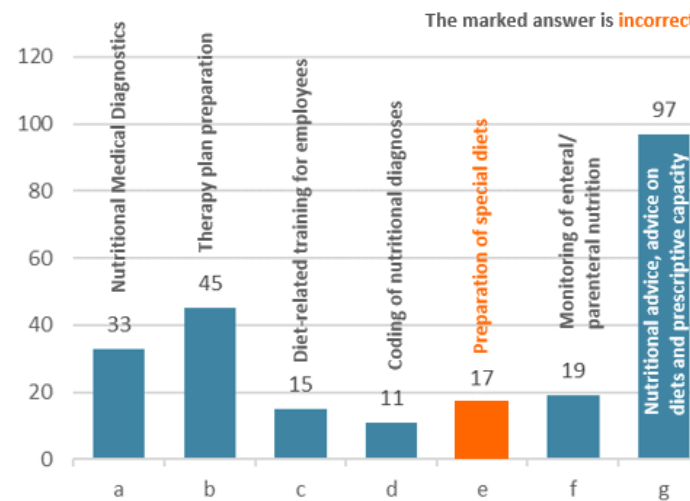
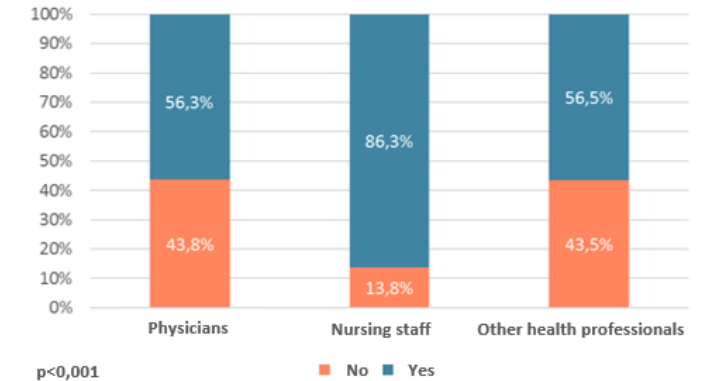


Figure 2: Multiple answers were possible, number of all answers n=287

Awareness of the nutritional support team within different professional groups



p<0,001

Figure 3: n=151 (Physicians n=48, Nursing staff n=80, Other health professionals n=23)

Conclusion

The NST and the overall impact of nutrition on the course of the disease were known to the majority of staff members. However, there were gaps in the understanding of the ranges of service and the members of the NST.

References

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