Unlocking Potentials: A Service Evaluation of Delirium Care in a UK Intensive Care Unit

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INTRODUCTION

Delirium is a serious complication in critically ill patients, influenced by multifaceted factors.

Best practices emphasise prevention and early recognition.

In our ICU, we undertook a nursing-led service evaluation to explore how everyday nursing practices may influence delirium care.

We focused on:
- CAM-ICU Assessment
- Pain management
- Bowel and bladder care
- Sleep care

Our goal: To understand how delirium care is delivered in this ICU and identify gaps in nursing practices

METHODS

Retrospective service evaluation using electronic health records (EHR) from 2023

👥 **Sample**: 148 patients met eligibility criteria

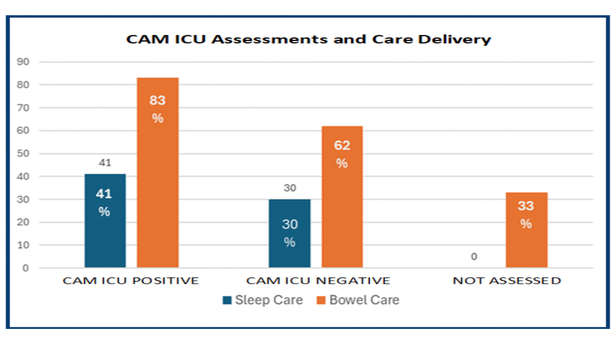
📊 **Analysis**: Descriptive and inferential statistics

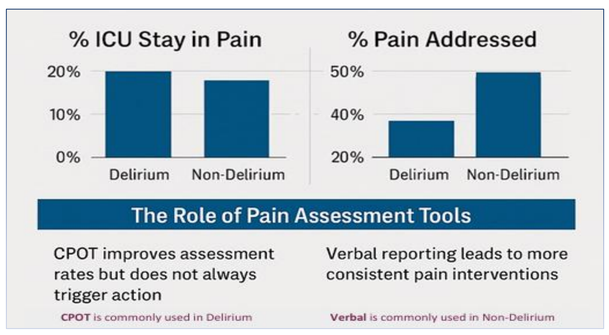
🗒️ **Governance**: registered with Quality Surveillance Information System (QSIS)

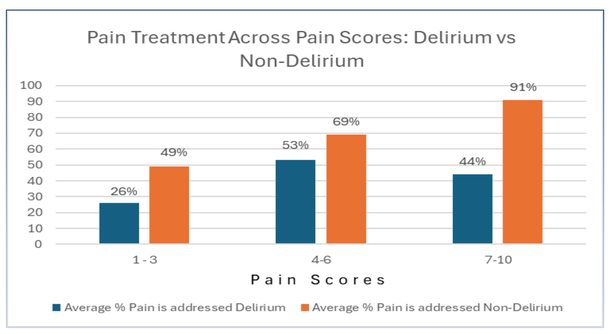
📌 **Scope**: Context-specific, intended to support local understanding and inform quality improvement

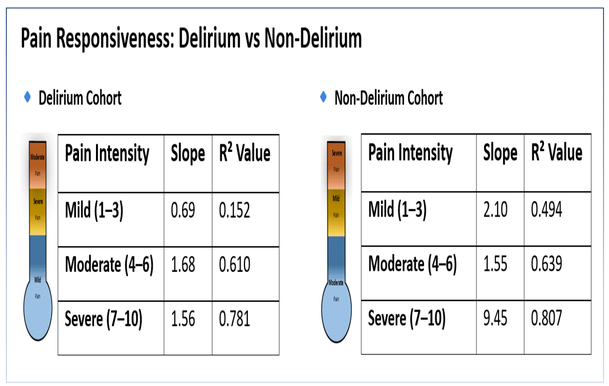
⚠️ **Limitations**: Single-centre study, based on EHR data alone, no stratification by ventilation status

RESULTS









- Delirious patients received significantly fewer pain interventions than non-delirious patients (38.5% vs. 49.9%, p = 0.04).
- Mild pain in delirium was least likely to prompt intervention (26%), with poor escalation (R^2 = 0.152).
- Moderate (53%) and severe pain (44%) showed stronger intervention patterns (R^2 = 0.610 and 0.781).
- CAM-ICU assessments correlated with increased sleep and bowel care.

Conclusion + Discussion

Does CAM-ICU assessment unlock holistic & person-centred care?

In our ICU, delirious patients assessed with CAM-ICU were **more likely to receive targeted care**. Routine use of CAM-ICU enables person-centred nursing and strengthens future QI initiatives in delirium care.

Is there equitable pain management in delirium?

Delirious patients in our ICU **received fewer pain interventions** despite comparable pain scores to non-delirious patients.

Key Messages

- **Routine CAM-ICU assessment enables more person-centred nursing care in ICU**
- **Data from this service evaluation shows that pain management in delirium is inconsistent**
- **Equitable pain management is needed for patients with delirium**

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