Reiki: Regulatory Status and Impact on Nursing Practice

Authors:

Alyssa Gibson SN, College of Nursing

Dr. Kimberly Cleveland JD, MSN, RN, C-MBC, College of Nursing, Primary Advisor

Abstract:

The utilization of complimentary therapies in nursing practice reduces stress in patients in post-surgical and oncological areas. Patients rely on nursing support to advocate for the provision of these therapies. While research has established benefits of these therapies, many states do not license or regulate the practice. Because there is no regulation of Reiki practice in most states, the ability for the nurse to advocate for the patient can become compromised. This review of the literature is a first step in identifying legal responsibilities of nurses involved in this dilemma.

The literature review, using CINAHL, shows that reiki has been helpful to patients post caesarean delivery, post total knee arthroplasty, and post chemotherapy in breast cancer. At present, there is no national or state wide system for credentialing of personnel wishing to attend to hospitalized patients. The time
is ripe to determine whether this complimentary therapy should be monitored by
the state because: there are many documented and undocumented Reiki masters
advertising to the public and charging money for therapy, most of these individuals
are not educated in healthcare and HIPAA restricts information that can be
exchanged between these practitioners and healthcare providers.

Reiki should be available for patients who can benefit from the stress
reduction and ability to contribute to the healing of patients where patients choose
this therapy. A registry of providers can assist in assuring patient safety,
determining the need for licensure, and that all practitioners are up to date with
current communication and HIPAA compliance.

Abstract for Program Booklet:

Complimentary therapies have been shown to reduce stress in numerous
patient areas. Many times, nurses are responsible in advocating for the provision
of these therapies. Research has established benefits of reiki but there is no
national or state wide licensure or regulatory policies for reiki. Due to the lack of
regulation, patient safety can be compromised. A literature review was done to
identify the legal responsibilities of nurses involved in this dilemma. The literature
review showed positive outcomes for patients receiving reiki therapy, but no
regulation. The goal of this research is to display the need for policy regulating
Reiki. Reiki therapy should be available for patients who can benefit from its healing potential, but in a safe and regulated way.