

OPTIMIZING NUTRITION SUPPORT IN PORTUGUESE INTENSIVE CARE UNITS

Associação Portuguesa de Nutrição Entérica e Parentérica (APNEP)

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Description of the initiative

The Portuguese Society of Enteral and Parenteral Nutrition (APNEP) aims to optimize the nutrition support provided in Portuguese Intensive Care Units (ICU) and reduce the gap between universal recommendations and the “real-world”.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to investigate barriers and optimize nutrition support among critically ill patients in the ICU.

Rationale/Background of the initiative

APNEP conducted, in past two years, an observational prospective study over the first ten days after admission to eleven Portuguese ICUs of nine general hospitals. 130 patients were enrolled and nutritional support was evaluated over a period of 1,300 days in which 80% of the days patients received nutritional support (66% by enteral route and 14% by parenteral route). Energy intake in the first 10 days was 12.4 ± 6.6 Kcal/Kg/d and protein intake was 0.3 ± 0.15 g; excluding the first 3 days it rose to 15.6 ± 7.4 Kcal/Kg/d and protein intake to 0.43 ± 0.05 g. ***So the gap in calorie and nutrition intake in Portuguese ICUs seems to be even worse than the real world findings in which patients receive 20 Kcal/Kg/d and 0.8–1 g/kg/d***

Scope of project, activities, implementation

APNEP decided to perform a new study with several objectives with these principles:

1. Enrol the largest possible number of ICUs in this study (until now 25 have been enrolled) with more than 600 patients.
2. Raise a multidisciplinary Portuguese nutrition Steering Group (between September – October 2016)
3. Develop a national strategic plan to investigate barriers and optimize nutrition support among critically ill patients in the ICU (November 2016 – January 2017):
 - a. Develop Portuguese Guideline and protocols for the critically ill patients
 - b. Offer training programs and workshops
4. Data will be collected over a five month period starting in February 2017. Each ICU will have a local coordinator but all data will be collected by nutritionist working outside the ICU.
5. Every week each ICU will receive a report with the previous week’s nutrition support provided to the critically ill patients. The aim is to:
 - a. Raise awareness regarding insufficient nutrition support given to their patients.
 - b. Implement new strategies in order to optimize nutrition support.
 - c. Maintain and perfect these strategies over the study period

Resources expected:

- Personnel (local coordinator, external researcher): e.g. data collection, analyses and publications, training healthcare professionals, coordination of guideline development (€25,000)
- Equipment: e.g. study materials, printed guideline, flyers/brochures, website (€5,000)

APNEP will provide additional funding if needed if the project is rewarded with the MNI Grant.

Conclusion

The factors resulting in the nonimplementation of recommendations and protocols appears to be multiple. Understanding the reasons behind behaviour should prevent failures. Using communication and teamwork to involve all appropriate health professionals in the planned new process, emphasizing the benefits of such change, could pave the way to successful implementation of updated ICU nutrition recommendations.