

Planning care for visually impaired children in the inpatient setting: a literature review.

Townsend, Aubrey A.
University of North Florida, College of Health
Jacksonville, FL USA 32224

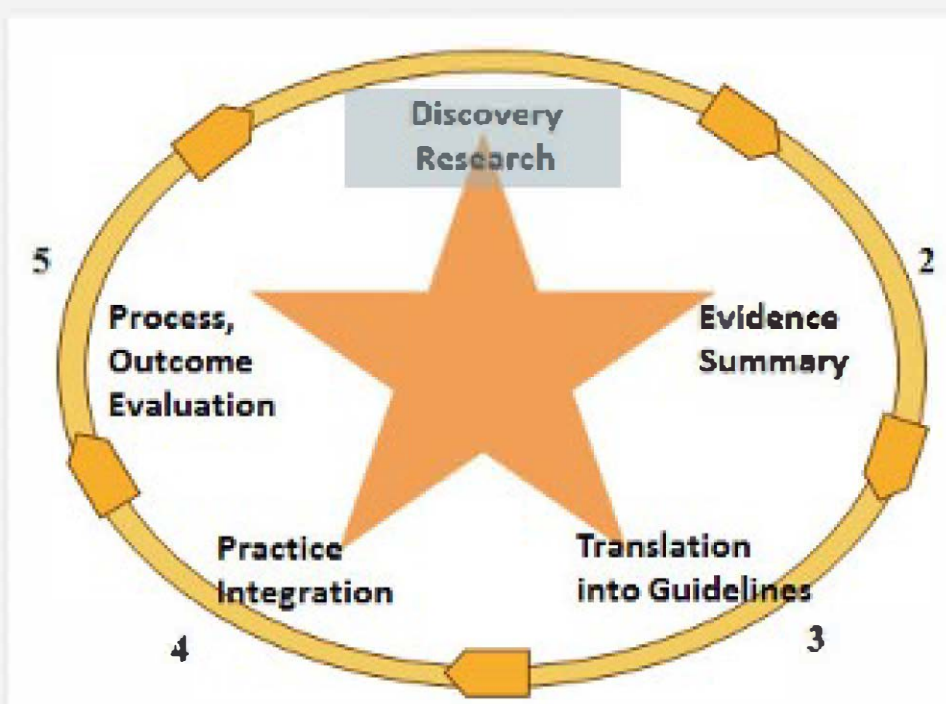
INTRODUCTION

- Visual impairment affects 3% of children in the United States. The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990 mandates accommodations for the blind population, such as verbalizing information and the allowance of seeing-eye dogs.
- A child's age and developmental stage are factored into each patient's plan of care, which makes pediatric healthcare a very diverse field. When a pediatric patient is visually impaired, this doubles the need for a specific and individualized care plan. The ADA has mandates that account for children and visually impaired individuals, but there are not provisions set in place that specifically account for visually impaired children. Furthermore, there is a lack of information detailing how visually impaired children are cared for in the inpatient setting.
- The purpose of this literature review is to identify age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate accommodations for visually impaired children in an overnight hospital stay.

CLINICAL QUESTION

- In visually impaired children experiencing hospitalization (P), how do specific and age-appropriate interventions (I) compared to that for a child with no visual deficits (C) affect the quality of care (O) during an overnight hospital stay? (T)

ACE STAR MODEL



METHODS

- **Databases:** CINAHL, PubMed
- **Keywords:** "Visual Impairment," "Visually Impaired," "Blind*," "Pediatric*," "Hospital*," "VIP," "Inpatient," "Child*"
- **Inclusion criteria:** peer-reviewed, full-text available, English
- **Search Results:** 20 articles

SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE

STUDY	TOPIC OF STUDY	LEVEL OF EVIDENCE
Beverley, C.A., Bath, P.A., and Booth, A., (2004). Health information needs of visually impaired people: a systematic review of the literature.	Health Informatics	1
Elsman, E., et al. (2019). Interventions to improve functioning, participation, and quality of life in children with visual impairment: a systematic review	Improving quality of life	1
Ghasemifard, F., et al., V. (2020). Characteristics and Efficacy of Play Therapy Interventions in Visually Impaired Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review Study	Play therapy	1
Oluonye, N., Sargent, J. (2018). Severe visual impairment: practical guidance for paediatricians.	Clinical Practice Guidelines	1
Egan, J.A., (2016). Improving Healthcare Experiences for Visually Impaired Service Members and Veterans: A Multidisciplinary Joint Agency Collaboration	Quality Improvement	3
Flanagan, N. M., Jackson, A. J., and Hill, A. E. (2003). Visual impairment in childhood: insights from a community-based survey	Awareness of visual impairment	3
Carlson, C., et al. (2020). Caring for Visually Impaired Patients in the Hospital: A Multidisciplinary Quality Improvement Project: A team of nurses worked with colleagues and the community to improve care for this vulnerable population.	Quality Improvement	4
Mashele, N., Smit, N., (2011). Comparing the effect of different living environments on the development of independent living skills in children with visual impairment.	Independent living	4
Quirino, M.D., Costa, L.E.L. (2014). The visual impairment for teens: the nurse's point of view.	Interviews of visually impaired teens	4

- Beverley, Bath, and Booth (2004) found that interprofessional coordination is crucial to delivering healthcare information to visually impaired patients. The study also indicated a need to include the visually impaired population in the research process.
- Elsman et al. (2019) found that the number of high-quality studies pertaining to the quality of life of visually impaired children is limited and that there is a need for further research.
- Ghasemifard et al. (2020) found that while play therapy for visually impaired minors caused an improvement in skills such as fine motor skills, self-help skills, and verbal abilities, there is insufficient research on the topic.
- Oluonye and Sargent (2018) found that a multidisciplinary approach and close, frequent monitoring are the best ways to manage the care of a visually impaired child.
- Egan (2016) found that when there are educational fact sheets available for healthcare staff to reference when caring for a visually impaired patient, a better quality of care is reported.
- Flanagan, Jackson, and Hill (2003) found that early assessment and determination of visual impairment in children will result in the best possible prognosis for the child's quality of life.
- Carlson et al. (2020) found that caring for visually impaired patients requires specific accommodations tailored to each patient that are determined through individual interviews.
- Mashele and Smit (2011) found that assessing the ability of visually impaired children to perform ADLs requires specific and structured tools. The study highlighted the need for standardized instruments to assess the independence of this population.
- Quirino and Costa (2014) found that nurses must act as versatile advocates for their patients who are visually impaired teenagers. Improving the quality of life for visually impaired adolescents requires a commitment to social justice, equity, and political advocacy, regardless of the setting.

DISCUSSION

- Current research suggests that there is a knowledge base on the care of visually impaired adults. However, there are limited resources available detailing the care of visually impaired children.
- Available interventions focus on the care of visually impaired teenagers, but it only briefly touches on inpatient care. Research focused on the care of visually impaired teenagers can be applied to the inpatient setting, but further studies must be performed.
- **Weaknesses:** There is a lack of research on the accommodations of hospitalized children who are visually impaired. There is limited data available on how to account for the needs of visually impaired children at varying developmental stages. There is a need for further research on how to accommodate for the specific needs of visually impaired infants, toddlers, and school-age children.
- **Recommendations:** Further research is needed on how to provide healthcare and discharge education to the visually impaired child at any developmental stage. However, the need for research is pronounced when the specific educational needs of children at different developmental stages are considered alongside the challenges that come with visual impairment. Registered nurses in the inpatient pediatric setting must be educated on interventions that are appropriate for visually impaired children at any developmental stage.

REFERENCES

References are available on request.

