Use of the Pasero Opioid-Induced Sedation Scale (POSS) in pediatric patients

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The Pasero Opioid-Induced Sedation Scale (POSS) is a valid, reliable tool used to assess sedation when administering opioid medications to manage pain. POSS is endorsed by The Joint Commission and the American Society for Pain Management Nursing to help prevent adverse opioid-related respiratory events. Although POSS is used to assess sedation in pediatric patients at some hospitals, it was not formally evaluated in the pediatric population. This study used a quasi-experimental design with a convenience sample of pediatric patients admitted to a large regional medical center. POSS was evaluated from three perspectives. First, the study was designed to compare documentation of sedation when opioids were administered before (n = 25) and after (n = 27) implementation of POSS to assess sedation. Second, occurrence of respiratory adverse events before and after implementation was compared. Third, appropriateness of using POSS in pediatric population was evaluated. When POSS was used, there was an increase in both clarity and frequency of documentation when sedation was assessed. There was no incidence of opioid-related adverse respiratory events after implementation of POSS. Finally, POSS was found to be appropriate and safe to use in pediatric population. Through survey, the majority of registered nurses who cared for the research subjects evaluated POSS as easy, appropriate and safe to use with pediatric patients. The nurses also noted using POSS provided standardized communication among staff regarding patients’ levels of sedation. No adverse effects, concerns, or objections were reported. Coincidentally, frequency of documentation of assessment of pain also improved with POSS.

Biography
Ann Quinlan-Colwell has completed her PhD at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She works as a Clinical Nurse Specialist and Chair of the Nurse Research Committee at New Hanover Regional Medical Center which is a regional trauma center in Wilmington, NC, USA. She has published and reviews for reputed peer review journals, has published book chapters and a book on pain management. She is current President of the Nu Omega chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International; President-elect of the Southern Pain Society and serves on the board of the American Society for Pain Management Nurses.

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