

ooo86 Health Care Professionals' Perceptions and Experience of Different Modalities for Enteral Feeding

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Aims: With an aging population, there is a concomitant increase in number of patients with dysphagia; and hence increase in prevalence of enteral feeding. Health care professionals (HCP) play a critical role in influencing decisions of patients and caregivers on their choice of modality for long-term enteral feeding.

This study aims to explore the perceptions of health care professionals on different modalities for enteral feeding and their experiences in initiating long-term enteral feeding among adult patients.

Methodology: Design. A qualitative explorative descriptive study design with purposive sampling approach was adopted.

Methods. A total of four speech therapists, fifteen nurses and seven doctors who are involved in initiating long term enteral tube feeding were recruited over a data collection period of August to December 2017. One to one interviews were conducted and audio-recorded. An inductive content analysis approach, with open coding, creation of categories and abstraction of data was adopted.

Result: Four main themes were generated: (1) NGT being a first choice; all respondents alluded that NGT is the modality first chosen and initiated as it can be easily inserted at bedside; (2) PEG is an alternative; most respondents reported that PEG is being regarded as an alternative when the first choice (NGT) fails; or upon request from patient or family; (3) Perceived better outcomes with PEG; Although PEG was considered as an alternative, health care professionals recognized that PEG is advantageous in terms of lower incidence of dislodgement; reduced frequencies for tube change, improved self-image; and (4) Barriers to promotion of PEG, challenging to promote a higher adoption of PEG due to lack of knowledge among HCP, insertion of PEG being a surgical procedure and lack of support in the community.

Conclusion: NGT remained as the modality of choice although health care professionals perceived better outcomes with the use of PEG.