Eye Care for Ventilated Patients in the Intensive Care Unit: a Quality Improvement Project

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Introduction

- All ventilated patients are at increased risk of eye injury secondary to sedation, trauma, infection, and dryness.
- Eyes are often neglected in critical illness, yet injury may result in permanent visual impairment.
- The increase in prone positioning and an associated corneal injury during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted shortcomings in eye care on the ICU.
- Rigorous application of a clear protocol for assessment and intervention can prevent the majority of corneal problems[1], yet one was not available for our Trust.
- We aimed to ensure local practices met the standards set out in national guidance[2].

Methods

- A questionnaire was sent to all ICU doctors and nurses to survey baseline levels of awareness and confidence in eye care practices.
- New Trust guidelines were developed and a poster created to supplement a local education campaign.
- A follow up questionnaire was sent 4 weeks later to establish the campaign's efficacy.

Results

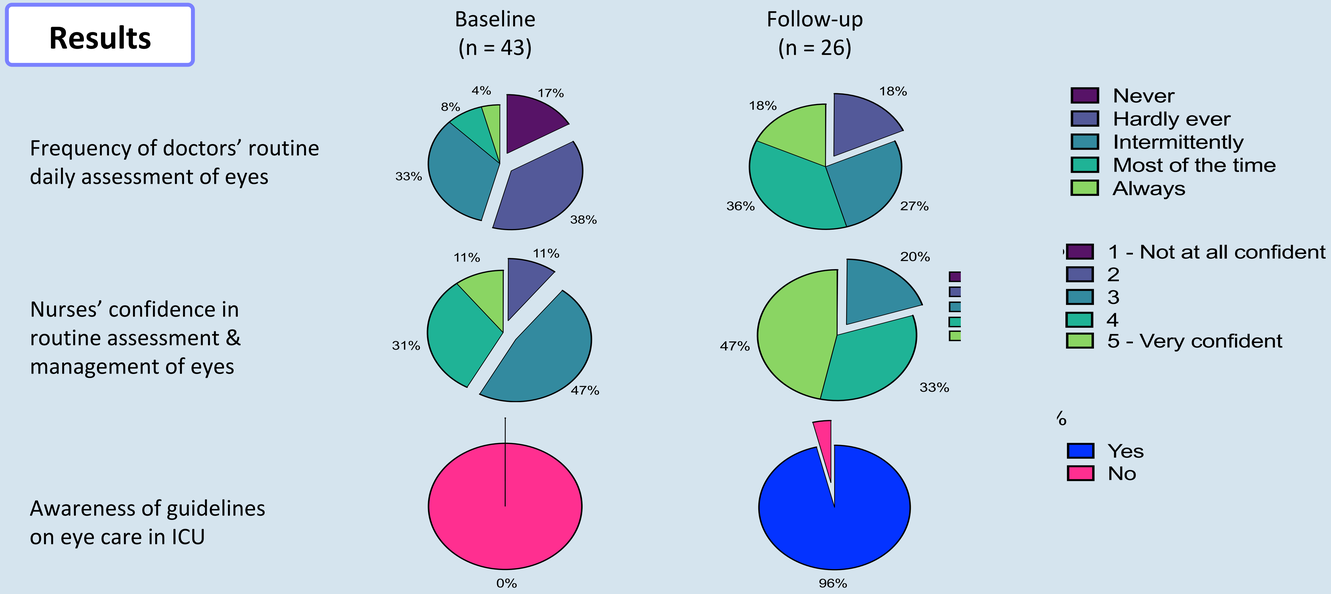


Figure 1. Graphs showing answers to questionnaire before and after the interventions

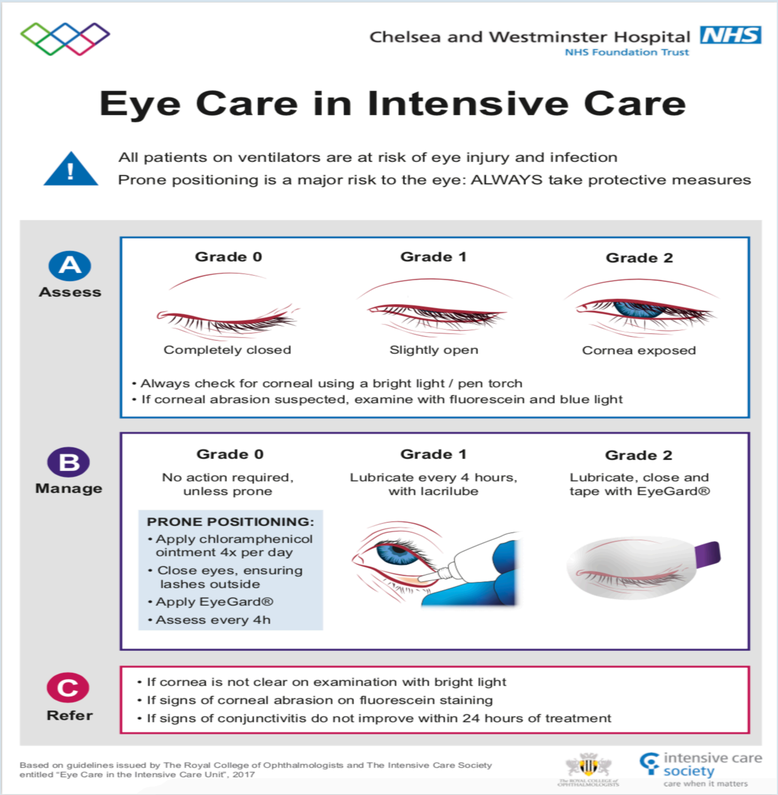


Figure 2. Poster created and displayed around the ICU

Conclusions

- Development of Trust Guidelines and an education campaign successfully improved awareness of and confidence in the assessment and management of eyes in the ICU.
- There remains a need to improve the patient notes system to facilitate documentation.

1. Rosenberg JB, Eisen MD (2008). Eye Care in the Intensive Care Unit: Narrative Review and Meta-Analysis. *Crit Care Med* 36(12):3151-3155 2. Eye Care in the Intensive Care Unit (2017). *Royal College of Ophthalmologists*, *Intensive Care Society*