

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

Hypoglycemia and Clinical Outcomes in Patients With Diabetes Hospitalized in the General Ward

Response to Ng et al.

In our study of hypoglycemia in hospitalized patients with diabetes (1), we have found a strong association between the frequency and severity of hypoglycemia and clinical outcomes including mortality and length of hospital stay. In their comment, Ng et al. (2) remind us that hypoglycemia as a clinical event is characterized not only by the blood glucose level but also by its duration. As expected, longer duration of hypoglycemia is associated with adverse outcomes (3). Previously published studies have shown that higher

staffing levels in the hospitals are associated with better care (4), including lower rates of “failure to rescue” patients from critical events such as cardiac arrest, shock, or gastrointestinal bleeding. The report by Ng et al. provides evidence that improvement in care as a result of better nurse staffing extends to the treatment of hypoglycemia. Their findings lend further support to the importance of adequate levels of health care personnel to the quality of treatment of hospitalized patients.

ALEXANDER TURCHIN, MD, MS^{1,2,3}
MICHAEL E. MATHENY, MD, MS, MPH^{4,5}
MARIA SHUBINA, SCD¹
JAMES V. SCANLON, PHARM⁶
BONNIE GREENWOOD, PHARM¹, BCPS¹
MERRI L. PENDERGRASS, MD, PHD^{1,3,7}

From ¹Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts; ²Clinical Informatics Research and Development, Partners Healthcare System, Boston, Massachusetts; ³Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts; ⁴Vanderbilt Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee; the ⁵Tennessee Valley Healthcare System, Veterans Administration, Nashville, Tennessee; ⁶Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Worcester, Massachusetts; and ⁷Medco Health Solutions, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey.

Corresponding author: Alexander Turchin, aturchin@partners.org.
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