Sensory Room for De-Escalation in a Psychiatric Hospital
Jessica Walker, RN, BSN
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Nashville, TN

Purpose
To develop a sensory room for the Thought Disorders unit of Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital using evidence-based practice to improve patient care

Task Force Objectives
• Identify best practices for sensory rooms
• Identify patient criteria for use of the sensory room
• Identify how the results from the sensory room are going to be measured
• Establish the items and set-up for the sensory room
• Make rules for the usage of the sensory room
• Establish how staff is going to be trained to use the sensory room

Evidence of Best Practice
Sensory rooms have contributed to:
• A reduction in seclusion and restraint
• A reduction in patients’ stress and agitation
• An increase in patients’ relaxation and cooperativeness

References

Usage Criteria
• The patient must display a willingness and cooperativeness to enter the sensory room
• Staff’s perception that the patient will harm self or others to the extent of imminent restraint or seclusion will exclude the patient from the sensory room

Measurable Outcomes
• The number of seclusions/restraints on the unit
• PRN medication usage before/after sensory room use
• Scores on the Broset Violence Checklist before/after a patient uses the sensory room

Next Steps
• Room set-up
• Rules for usage
• Staff training

Acknowledgements
Jennifer Barut, MSN, RN-BC; Tom Christenberry, PhD, RN, Avni Cirpili, RN, MSN, Lori Harris, BSN, RN-BC, Nancy Lancaster, Brent Lemonds, MS, RN, EMT-P, FACHE; William Parsons, PhD, Vicki Sandlin, MSN, RN, Nancy Wells, DNSc, RN, FAAN, Johnny Woodard, BSN, RN-BC, & The Sensory Room Task Force of VPH 1