

PROCESSING MEMORIES OF ICU:

Creating illustrations for patient diaries in collaboration with Cheshire & Mersey ICU Steps group

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INTRODUCTION

- Many patients discharged from ICU report unpleasant delusional memories
- Strongly associated with psychological morbidity, including PTSD
- ICU diaries reduce this impact by allowing safe memory reconstruction
- Patients in the ICU Steps support group report ongoing distressing memories
- Need identified for improved educational materials to assist patient recovery

SCAN ME



METHODS

- Artwork created using 'Procreate' by a doctor with expertise in illustrating patient information
- Images depicted a typical ICU bedspace (from patient and staff perspectives) and commonly used invasive devices with labels
- Cartoon style used to reduce visual intensity and potential patient distress
- Preliminary illustrations presented to Cheshire & Mersey ICU Steps members (n=10), including former patients of ICU, relatives and nursing staff
- Following feedback, a dialysis machine and glossary were added to address patient need
- Final illustrations were re-presented to the focus group in November 2024

RESULTS

- Illustrations were well received, with many patients appreciating the cartoon style
- Found to be less distressing than realistic images of invasive monitoring, which helped them reconstruct their memories with reduced emotional discomfort
- Helped identify the purpose of invasive devices and sources of auditory stimuli
- One patient reported that the patient-view bedspace illustration closely matched their recollection but helped to fill gaps

CONCLUSION

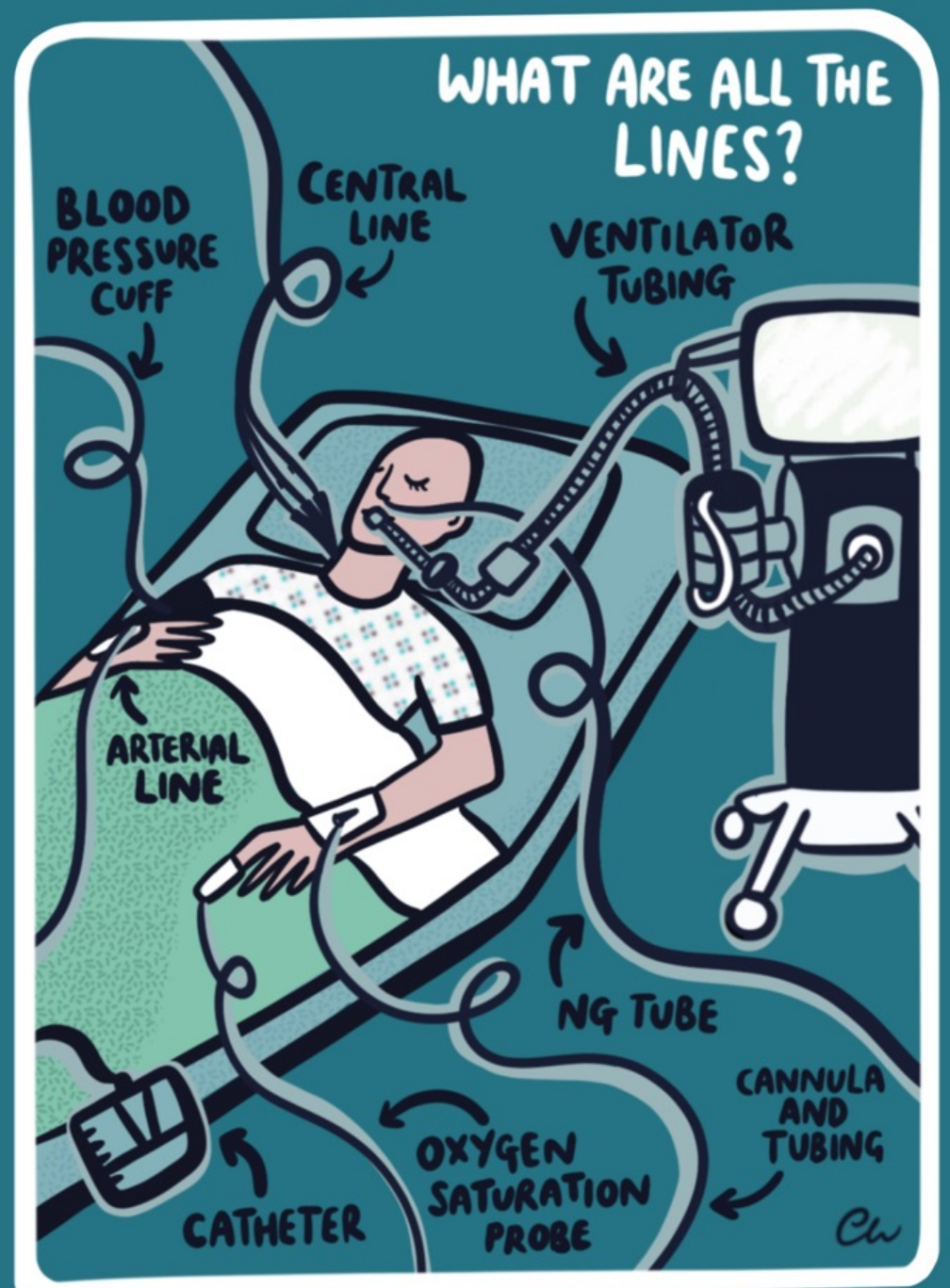
- Overall, the digital illustrations were positively received and supported safe memory reconstruction among members of the Cheshire & Mersey ICU Steps group
- Potential to reduce psychological morbidity
- They have now been incorporated into ICU diaries across the Cheshire and Mersey Adult Critical Care Network and shared globally on Twitter

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For more illustrations: www.behance.net/charlottewoodward

References:

1. Jones C, Griffiths RD, Humphris G, Skirrow PM. Memory, delusions, and the development of acute posttraumatic stress disorder-related symptoms after intensive care. Crit Care Med. 2001. PMID: 11373423
2. Kiekkas P, Theodorakopoulou G, Spyrtos F, Baltopoulos GI. Psychological distress and delusional memories after critical care: a literature review. Int Nurs Rev. 2010. PMID: 20796057
3. Gazzato A, Scquizzato T, Imbriaco G, Negro A, Caballo Garrido MC, Landoni G, Zangrillo A, Borghi G. The Effect of Intensive Care Unit Diaries on Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety, and Depression: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials. Dimens Crit Care Nurs. 2022. PMID: 35905428
4. Cheshire and Mersey Adult Critical Care Network: Patient Diary Information and Guidance. <https://www.cheshireandmerseyccmtnetworks.nhs.uk/cmccn-patient-diary-guidance>



Labelled illustration depicting typical invasive monitoring in ICU