

Intensive Care Units

Durbin, C. G. (2006). Team model: Advocating for the optimal method of care delivery in the intensive care unit. *Critical Care Medicine*, 34(3), S12-S12-S17.

A review of the literature focused on published data on the team model of intensive care unit care delivery. The team model for delivery of ICU care reduces mortality, ICU length of stay, hospital length of stay, and cost of care. Current shortages of all ICU health care providers is a barrier to universal implementation of the team model.

McCauley, K., & Irwin, R. S. (2006). Changing the work environment in ICUs to achieve patient-focused care: The time has come. (see comment). *Chest*, 130(5), 1571-1571-1578.

Skilled communication and collaboration are essential to transforming work environments. This article discusses a project initiated by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN), which seeks to implement patient-focused care. Communication, continuity, and concordance with patients' wishes are all essential to implementing patient-focused care.

Mitka, M. (2006). Less may be more when managing patients with severe chronic illness. *JAMA : The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 296(2), 159-160. doi:10.1001/jama.296.2.159

While conventional wisdom states that care for older patients with chronic diseases is best performed by specialty physicians in acute care settings such as academic medical centers, a new report suggests otherwise.

Researchers with the Center for the Evaluative Clinical Sciences at Dartmouth Medical School in Hanover, NH, reported that medical costs varied across the nation but that quality of care is not necessarily linked to higher-cost care. For more than a decade, these researchers have been studying and issuing reports showing such variation, but this study shows for the first time differences among specific hospitals and their physician networks. These differences in cost, visits to specialists, days in the hospital, and use of intensive care beds exist after controlling for illness severity.