

Improving Foot Health Outcomes: A Literature Review on the Impact of Preventative Foot Care and Establishment of a Foot Care Program

Shannon Riley Young, BSN, RN, CWON, CFCN



Background

- Preventative foot care addresses clinical issues like infections, ulcers, chronic pain, and the potential for amputations.
- By focusing on early detection, good hygiene, appropriate footwear, and consistent professional evaluations, it aims to prevent severe complications, enhance mobility and quality of life, lower healthcare expenditures, and reduce mortality rates linked to foot problems, notably lower-extremity amputations.
- Preventative foot care is crucial, especially for high-risk individuals such as diabetics and elderly.

PICO(T)

Do diabetic and elderly patients who receive preventative foot care in an outpatient clinic, have improved outcomes (e.g. less amputation/ulceration rates, less hospitalizations, decreased falls) compared to those who do not receive preventative measures?

Methods

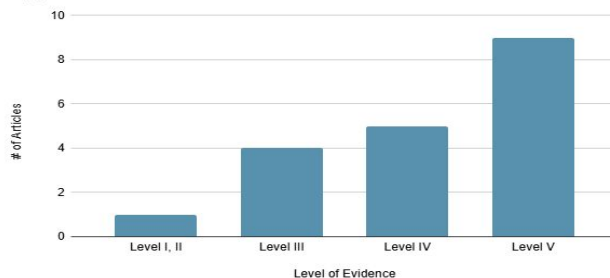
Key Words: Diabetic, elderly, podiatry, CFCN, foot care, foot care nurse, foot care clinic, preventive foot care, mobility and foot care.

EBP Model used - Johns Hopkins, rating scale I-V

Databases: Peer-reviewed publications (from databases such as PubMed, CINAHL, Google Scholar), Standards (regulatory, professional, community), Clinical Practice Guidelines, Organizational data (e.g., quality improvement or financial data, local clinical expertise, patient/family preferences), Evidence-based professional organization position statements, consensus studies (e.g., commissioned reports from the National Academy of Medicine, professional organizations, philanthropic foundations)

Appraisal of Evidence and Literature Review Findings

Appraisal of Evidence



*Summary of Individual Evidence Appraisals

Systematic reviews highlight the need for preventative foot care by podiatrists and certified foot care nurses (CFCN). Clinical guidelines emphasize structured, evidence-based measures and multidisciplinary collaboration to enhance patient safety and staff training.

Synthesis

Consistencies: Foot care clinics and specialized foot care providers, such as a CFCN, are essential components of health care. They contribute to an improved overall quality of life through preventative measures, including assessment and prompt referral, and result in substantial cost savings.

Inconsistencies: While the existing literature confirms the efficacy of preventative foot care in reducing the incidence of amputations, ulcerations and falls, there remains a limited body of research concerning optimal methods for clinic initiation and inpatient applications.

Results

- The literature review showed that a foot care prevention program, utilizing foot specialists like certified foot care nurses, enhances overall quality of life in the diabetic and elderly population.
- When reviewing research using an evidenced based practice model, foot care prevention programs improved patient outcomes in the studied populations in a variety of ways:
 - early detection of ulcers, infection
 - consistent care helps to identify issues before they become serious
 - lower healthcare costs by preventing complications like amputations and hospitalizations
 - reduced incidence of falls in elderly patient populations
 - decreased mortality rates associated with foot-related complications
- Additionally, patients saw an increase in mobility, with the proper foot hygiene, appropriate footwear, and consistent professional foot assessments provided by these prevention programs.

Conclusions

The literature review highlighted the need for prophylactic foot care by qualified professionals, like certified nurses, due to the growing elderly and diabetic populations. This preventative approach is consistently shown to improve patient outcomes, enhance quality of life through proactive assessment and timely referrals, decrease amputations, and reduce healthcare costs. Despite extensive literature on improved outcomes, there's limited information on implementing preventative foot and nail clinics and inpatient programs. Based on these findings a business plan was developed for implementing an outpatient foot and nail clinic.

Contact Information & References

Shannon R Young, BSN, RN, CWON, CFCN
 Saint Joseph Hospital, CHI Saint Joseph Health
 One Saint Joseph Drive, Lexington, KY 40504
 Email: shannon.young900@commonspirit.org

