Background and Significance: Effective management of hospitalized, delirious, older adults exhibiting agitated, combative, and/or disruptive behavior was identified by frontline nurses as a significant clinical concern on the orthopedic/neurological unit. Current evidence suggests that ineffective management of these behaviors may stem from a lack of delirium risk factors and potential precipitating factors knowledge. Review of literature indicates rates for delirium is highest among this population which is similar to the patient population on the orthopedic/neurological unit.

Purpose: The purpose was to evaluate the effectiveness of an educational intervention on nurses’ knowledge of delirium.

Sample/Setting: Nine registered nurses volunteered to participate in our study initially. Seven nurses completed the study in an orthopedic/neurological unit at a community-based hospital.

Method/Procedure: A pilot study with a pre-post test design was used. A 10-item delirium knowledge assessment tool designed and published by Michelle E. Meako was administered to the nurses prior to the one-hour educational presentation on delirium. The educational presentation included an adapted PowerPoint on delirium from the Nurses Improving the Care of Healthsystem Elders (NICHE’s) Knowledge Center and a delirium handout from the National Association of Orthopedic Nurses (NAON). Two weeks after the educational presentation, the nurses were asked to complete the assessment tool again.

Results: Nurses’ knowledge was assessed to determine the effectiveness of the educational interventions using the comparison of the assessment tool pre and post educational presentation. Results are pending at this time, as data from the post-tests are being collected.

Conclusion: Depending on the pilot’s findings, the research team may recommend further expansion of delirium education to include all the nurses on the orthopedic/neurological team.