ABSTRACT

The thesis reviews airway management practices in intubated tracheostomised patients. Patients requiring mechanical ventilation have their airways secured mostly by endotracheal or tracheostomy tubes. Such patients are in a great risk of developing serious complications. One of the most common is the ventilator-acquired pneumonia (VAP). Currently, VAP represents a major problem not only in the Czech Republic but globally. In the USA, VAP is the most common nosocomial infection and represents 25% of all ICU infections. VAP complications lead to deterioration of the patients' condition, extend the total duration of hospitalization and some present a mortality risk. The VAP mortality rate has been reported to be 20-50%. Moreover, VAP complications lead to an increase in health care costs.

The goal of the thesis is the comparison of the state of the art scientific knowledge, clinical guidelines and current clinical practices. The thesis describes the practice in the highly specific nursing activity - airway management, using case studies. My research took place at ARO (ICU - intensive care unit). The first case study involves an intubated patient, the second one a patient with the tracheostomy tube.

The analysis has shown that the clinical practice guidelines of the ARO department are being followed by the nursing staff. However, the recommended procedures are not always in full agreement with the state of the art of scientific knowledge. I therefore propose an update of the current guidelines for ICUs. Adopting these practices could help to reduce potential complications. The proposed guidelines for airway management could serve as an aid for novice personnel.

keywords: securing of the airways, ventilator - associated pneumonia, cleaning of the airways, artificial lung ventilation