

IMPROVING PATIENT SATISFACTION

Anne Howard, BC-RN, CCM
John Muir Medical Center Concord Campus
Anne.Howard@johnmuirhealth.com

Purpose and PICO Question

The purpose of this project was to determine if scripting, use of open access communication boards, and early identification of patient/family concerns improved Press Ganey patient satisfaction survey indicators: Speed of the discharge process and Extent felt ready for discharge. My PICO question is “Can the use of scripting, open access communication boards, and early identification of patient/family concerns, increase patient readiness for discharge home and improve patient satisfaction with the home discharge process on a renal/metabolic unit”.

Background and Evidence Review

Project setting is a 250 bed community hospital with “test of change” limited to the 26 bed renal/metabolic unit. Patient satisfaction scores for ‘speed of the discharge process,’ and ‘extent felt ready for discharge’ dropped significantly in the first quarter of 2009 on the renal/metabolic unit. Literature review indicates nursing care is perceived by patients as task oriented not patient focused. Literature review of patient experience indicates patients do not feel their individual ‘information needs’ are being met by nursing.

Methods

Informal education on the use of scripting, and Press Ganey verbiage to use during patient contact was given to the renal/metabolic unit staff. “Ticket for Discharge” form was introduced to the renal/metabolic unit staff at a staff meeting and to the Unit Council prior to implementation. The Unit Council assisted in the logistical planning of getting the “Ticket to Discharge” form to the bedside. Measurements used were the renal/metabolic unit pre and post intervention Press Ganey scores and Medicare average length of stay data.

Results

After intervention implementation, data analysis showed a 5.8% decrease in Press Ganey patient satisfaction scores with ‘speed of the discharge process,’ 16.4% increase in ‘extent felt ready for discharge’ and an increase of 0.33 days in the Medicare average length of stay. Short staffing of the hospitalist service during the data collection period may have impacted the ‘speed of the discharge process,’ and Medicare average length of stay data.

Conclusion

The data does not provide adequate information to determine the efficacy of the interventions used. While the data is inconclusive, it does warrant further investigation.

Limitation of the study included limited support from renal/metabolic unit leadership, no ready access to data, and inconsistent participation by the renal/metabolic unit staff.

Selected References

Jacob, Lolita and Eileen Poletick. "Systematic Review: Predictors of Successful Transition to Community Based Care for Adults with Chronic Care Needs." Case Management Journal (2008): 154-165.

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Key words: patient satisfaction, patient experience, nurse communication, patient communication, discharge process, ready for discharge, scripting, phrasing, Press Ganey, communication skills