Ambulatory Surgical Centers are fast paced areas. With so much attention placed on time efficiency and throughput, the need for ease and consistency in providing discharge instructions is essential. It was noted by the RNs in the ASC, that patients who had the same procedure, sometimes received inconsistent discharge instructions, which depended on which RN was performing the teach. Some discharge instructions were more detailed and comprehensive than others. Also, in the event that there was a float RN working in the ASC, he/she did not have easy access to the proper instructions needed to provide to the patients.

After identifying this breakdown in consistency and communication, and realizing that the current system was a potential patient safety hazard, the RNs in the ASC developed standardized teaching sheets that were specific to each outpatient procedure being performed. These forms were then distributed to each of the attending surgeons who performed each procedure for evaluation and approval. Then the forms were reviewed by the patient education department at RPCI, for final approval and printed for use in the ASC.

These forms are given to each patient upon discharge and are specific to their procedure. It is printed in large, bold-faced font and the language chosen is in laymen’s terms to assure ease in reading and understanding. Through collaboration between the ASC RNs and the Attending MDs, clear, concise instructions are easily communicated to patients in a uniform, consistent fashion.