STANDARDIZATION OF HAND-OFF IN PACU
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Problem: There were a variety of tools and methods utilized in the PACU for hand-off report. Due to the introduction of the electronic medical record (EMR), some nurses used no written form, while others find the EMR cumbersome for report and preferred a written hand-off communication tool. The attending anesthesiologist wanted the form to be utilized by the providers to indicate if follow-up was required on x-rays or blood work. The hand-off procedure needed to be standardized to improve communication among nurses and physicians in the PACU.

Description: Staff nurses were asked for their input to ensure utilization of one form. The new hand-off communication form was then completed by the PACU performance improvement committee to be utilized for any PACU nurse to nurse handoff. The final copy of the new written handoff report included:

- Pre-operative patient history including allergies, obstructive sleep apnea risk, and any co-morbidities
- Intraoperative information including anesthesia type, surgical procedure, intake and output, and medications given
- Postoperative assessment information including skin integrity, neurological assessment, intravenous site, pain level, wound assessment, and intake and output
- Surgical orders, such as blood work to be drawn, would be noted on the hand-off report as a ‘to do’ or ‘completed’ item

Evaluation: The tool was rolled out after educational in-services were done. Staff was accepting of the tool and vocalized the need for one tool. Audits will be done in two months to measure compliance rate. Ongoing events are reported and reviewed at monthly PI meetings.