

INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY ON THE USE OF ISOLATION ROOM AND CARTS

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Inconsistencies and poor compliance to HEIC (Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control) policy on the use of isolation room and carts for patients on isolation precaution was identified during the Comprehensive Unit Safety Program meeting. To address the issue, a team was created to review current unit practice and compare it to existing HEIC policy on Standard and Isolation Precautions.¹

The unit practice revealed that the isolation cart and room supplies are disorganized; overstock and supply bins and carts are not emptied or cleaned after every use. There was inadequate staff knowledge on the HEIC policy and recommended traffic flow in the use of the isolation room. The inconsistencies in practice led to poor compliance, inefficiency in use of supplies and increase in wastage and unit costs.

The staff was engaged in identifying items/supplies needed in the care of prep and post-op patients. A list of supplies is created and baskets and bins were reorganized. Traffic flow of personnel going in and out of the isolation room is defined. Staff educated. Compliance was monitored monthly through unit based audits.

Standardization of practice in the utilization of isolation room and cart supplies and defining traffic flow improved compliance to HEIC policy. It identified cost efficient measures in the use of supplies and decrease in wastage and unit costs. It promoted safe practice in the avoidance of cross contamination and prevention of spread of infection.

¹ HEIC Infection Control and Prevention: Standard and Isolation Precautions Policy, accessed October 15, 2012, http://www.insidehopkinsmedicine.org/hpo/policies/39/132/policy_132.pdf