

PERIOPERATIVE STROKE SCREENING TOOL (PHASE I)

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Background Information: Within 12-months, two patients exhibited symptoms of stroke that were not recognized in a timely manner in the PACU at UMMC. Incidence of perioperative stroke in non-cardiac, non-neurological surgery patients is approximately 1 per 1000 cases but is associated with an eight fold increase in mortality. Due to confounding factors of anesthesia and frequent opioid administration, stroke symptoms can easily be masked. No screening tool for perioperative stroke in this population was found in the literature.

Objectives of Project: Develop a screening tool to determine risk for perioperative stroke with follow on focused neurological assessments post-operatively in high-risk patients.

Process of Implementation: A screening tool was developed based on the literature, and a pilot program was developed. From July 6, 2015 through October 2, 2015, PACU nurses screened patients to determine their risk for perioperative stroke. Patients at increased risk had a focused neurological assessment on arrival and reassessed every two hours for the first 24 hours post-operatively or until they transferred out of the PACU. PACU nurses collected data for each patient they received.

Statement of Successful Practice: 895 patients were screened for perioperative stroke risk. Of these, 324 (36.2%) met screening criteria to be considered at risk. Two patients (0.6%) had a stroke that were detected with onset of symptoms.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Implications are to identify patients at increased risk for perioperative stroke so that providers can increase neurological monitoring for early identification and timely intervention.