

OPERATION: SHHH! REDUCING NOISE IN THE PACU

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Background

- At New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, PACU bed requests from the Ambulatory Surgery F10 Operating Room (OR) to the F10 Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) were made through phone calls.
- These phone calls from the OR resulted in a high volume of noise in the PACU.
- Referenced from ASPAN Standard II Environment of Care, “perianesthesia nursing practice promotes and maintains a safe, comfortable and therapeutic environment” (ASPAN, 2017).
- Will the combined utilization of technology and daily quiet hours create a more calming environment in the PACU?

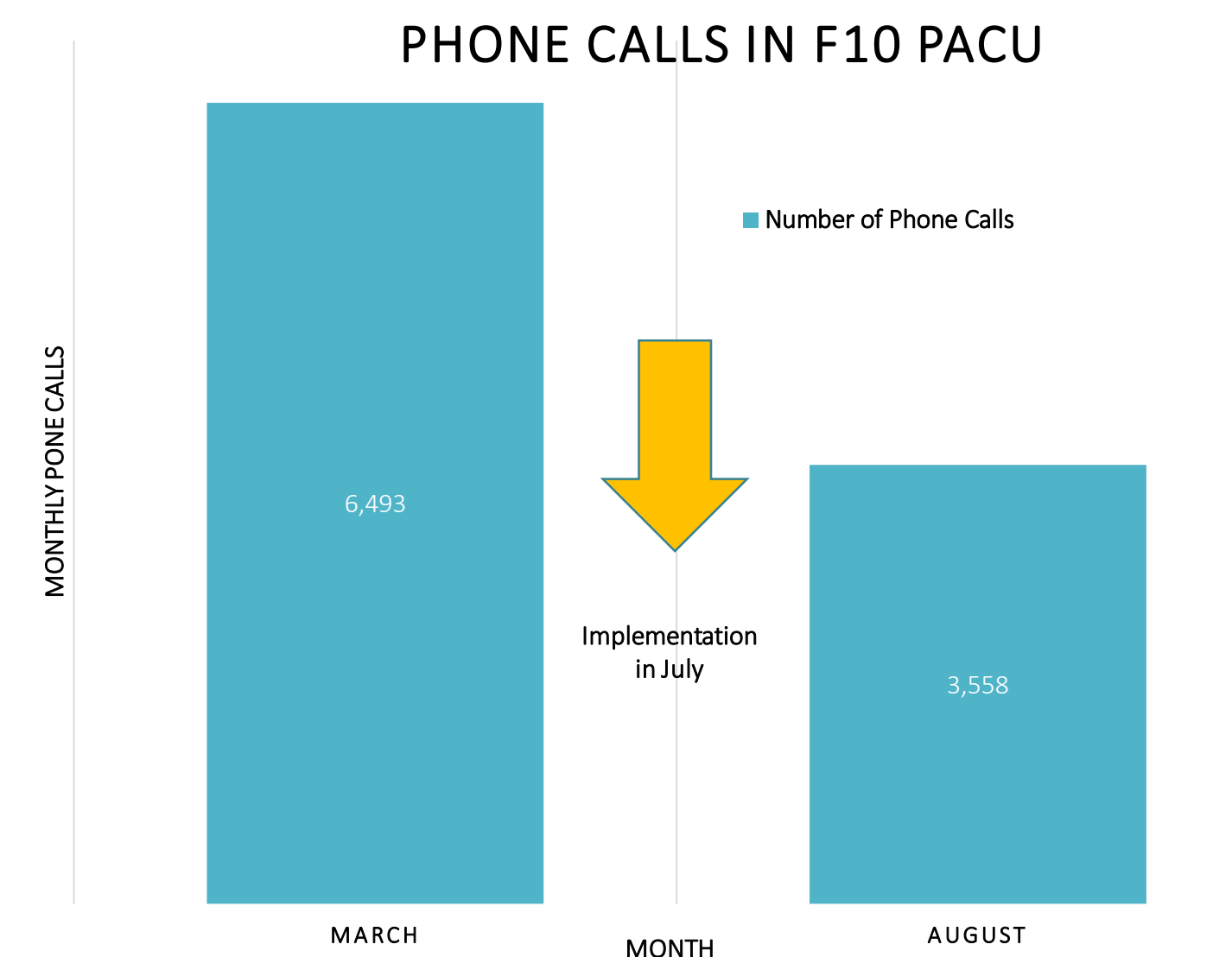
Methods

- In July 2017, an electronic notification of bed requests called the Electronic Call Back (ECB) from the OR to the PACU was created.
- Interdisciplinary education took place for the staff in the OR and PACU regarding utilization of technology including Mobile Heartbeat and the new ECB
- Additionally, daily quiet hours were introduced in an area where quiet hours were not historically implemented.
- During quiet hours, lights are dimmed and staff members speak in a quiet and calming voice. A “noise champion” is assigned daily to introduce the quiet hours.
- IRB approval is not required for this performance improvement project.

Results

Call volume reports measured monthly phone call volumes in the PACU.

- In **March 2017**, pre-ECB implementation there were 6,493 phone calls received.
- In **August 2017**, one month after implementation there were 3,558 received.
*With the implementation of our ECB, there was a **45% decrease** in environmental noise, as measured by phone calls.*



A unit-wide survey was performed to receive feedback on modifications made on the unit.

- 100% of RNs enjoy the ECB and quiet hours and all observed that patients appreciate our efforts.
- 92% of employees state that during quiet hours they speak softer to create a quiet and more therapeutic environment.

Discussion

Evidence supports that a noisy and interruptive environment can alter the patient’s healing process and impair recovery.

- By implementing noise reduction techniques such as decreasing the frequency of phone call interruptions and quiet hours, the PACU can promote an optimal healing environment for patients recovering from surgery.
- Further efforts will include the implementation of white noise machines, aromatherapy, and continued use of technology to improve our efforts.

References

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