

How to Improve Communication Between the Perioperative Team and Patient's Family/Designee During Their Perioperative Journey While Keeping it Meaningful, Safe and Effective

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Background Information: In perioperative setting healthcare providers talk to patient's family in-person for condition updates, surgical outcomes, findings, and disposition. These tasks became increasingly difficult to accomplish magnified by Covid19 pandemic. The family/designee were restricted to come or visit the patient in the hospital. New safety precautions and protocols were instituted and implemented to guard the well-being of the patient, family members, and healthcare providers. Patients and their family want access to their doctors and healthcare experience without undue exposure to unnecessary risks.

Objectives of Project: Improve communication between healthcare providers and patient family member/designee while keeping it meaningful, safe and effective.

Process of Implementation: A multidisciplinary team approach from all members of the perioperative team to develop individualized HIPPA compliant templated messages for every phase of the perioperative journey.

- a. Collaborated with IT department: online training of all perioperative staff and program technical support.
- b. Developed process: educational resources to support staff
- c. Developed process for educating family/support person
- d. Conducted staff and patient's satisfaction survey. Documented outcomes can be used to improve and enhance this new practice.

Statement of Successful Practice: 92% of surgical patients participated in the first 3 months of its implementation. 1745 participants out of 1897 OR cases, the 2407 messages sent, led to increased meaningful communication between providers and patients' families in real time and "kept them in the loop" throughout the process of care coordination. 96.5% of participants rated the program satisfactorily. To date, DVAHCS ranked #1 nationwide in the VHA for the utmost use of the program. 72% of the perioperative end-users responded favorably for the ease of use, improved overall patient care, and enhanced provider-family communication.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Text messaging is an acceptable powerful messaging tool and an efficacious component for connecting patient and family members with their health care providers throughout the entire perioperative journey. It encourages participation of the family in a team effort to decrease stress, speed up recovery throughout the process of care coordination and increased patient's awareness of connection with their health care providers. Peri anesthesia nurses are ardent proponents of advances in technology aimed at improving care to patient and their family/support person.