PACU Pause

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Phoenix Children's

Background

- Lack of standardized patient handoff from the Anesthesiologist and Operating Room (OR) Nurse to the PACU Nurse.
- The PACU nurses found that significant patient information was not being communicated.
- PACU nurses were expected to assess their patient and place them on the monitor, while report was being given
- Without a standardized handoff report there is a potential for increased patient safety concerns, miscommunications, and a lack of continuity of care.

Objectives

- Implement a standardized handoff process in the PACU.
- Allow time for the PACU RN to assess the patient prior to report.
- Improve communication of patient information between the OR team and PACU RN
- Decrease errors and enhance the patient and family experience.

Metrics

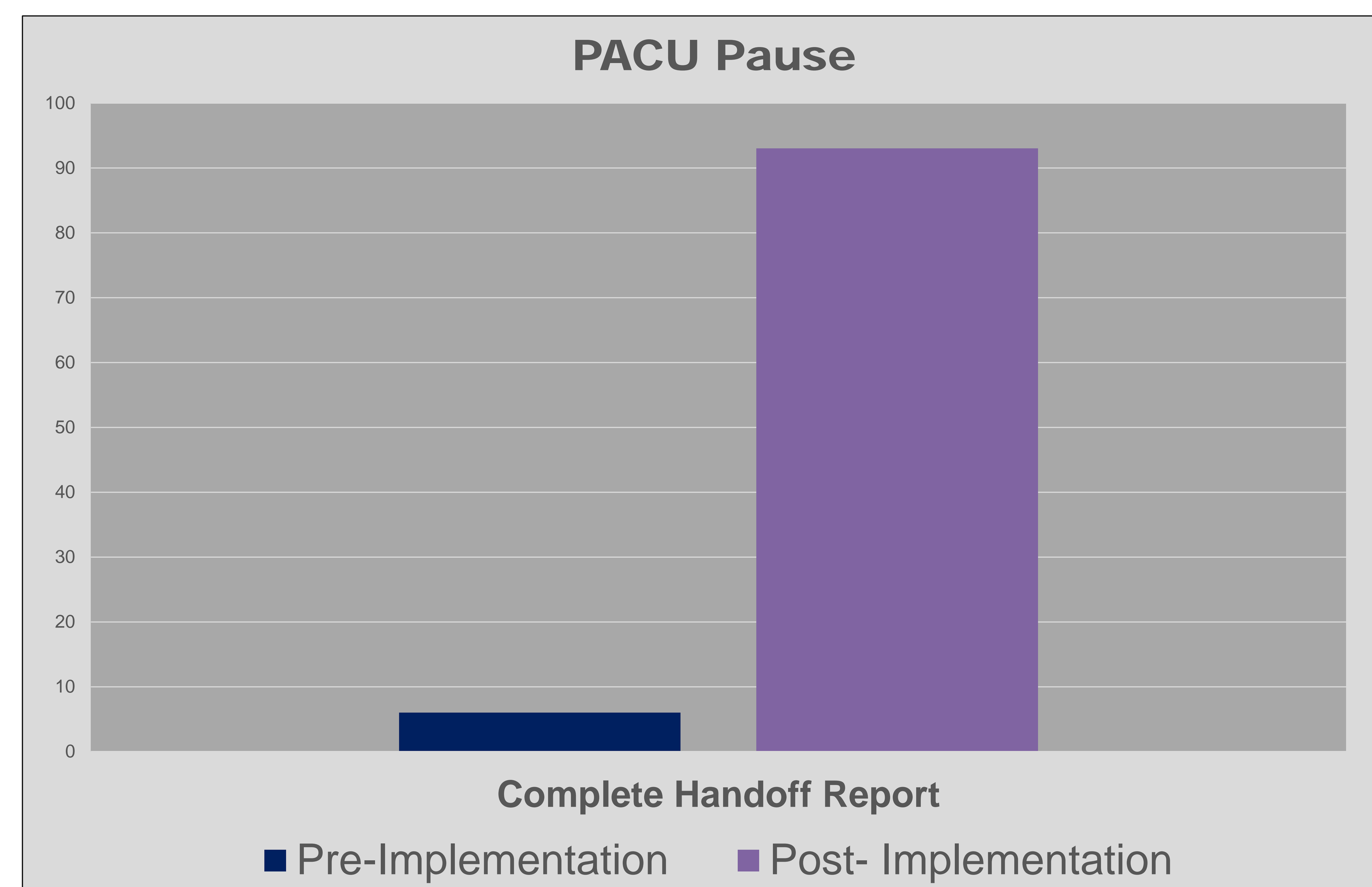
- An audit was performed to identify areas of concern related to patient handoff.
- PACU Pause trial was initiated and audits resumed.
- Progress was measured by comparing pre and post implementation audits.

Handoff Process

- When patient arrives in the PACU bay, the PACU RN places the patient on the monitor and does a quick assessment.
- Once the PACU RN is ready, eye contact is made with the anesthesiologist to indicate that the PACU RN is ready for report.
- Complete patient report is given by the anesthesiologist, followed by the OR Nurse.
- The PACU RN then has time for questions before the OR team leaves the bedside.
- During the time that report is being given, any additional team members in the area remain quiet.

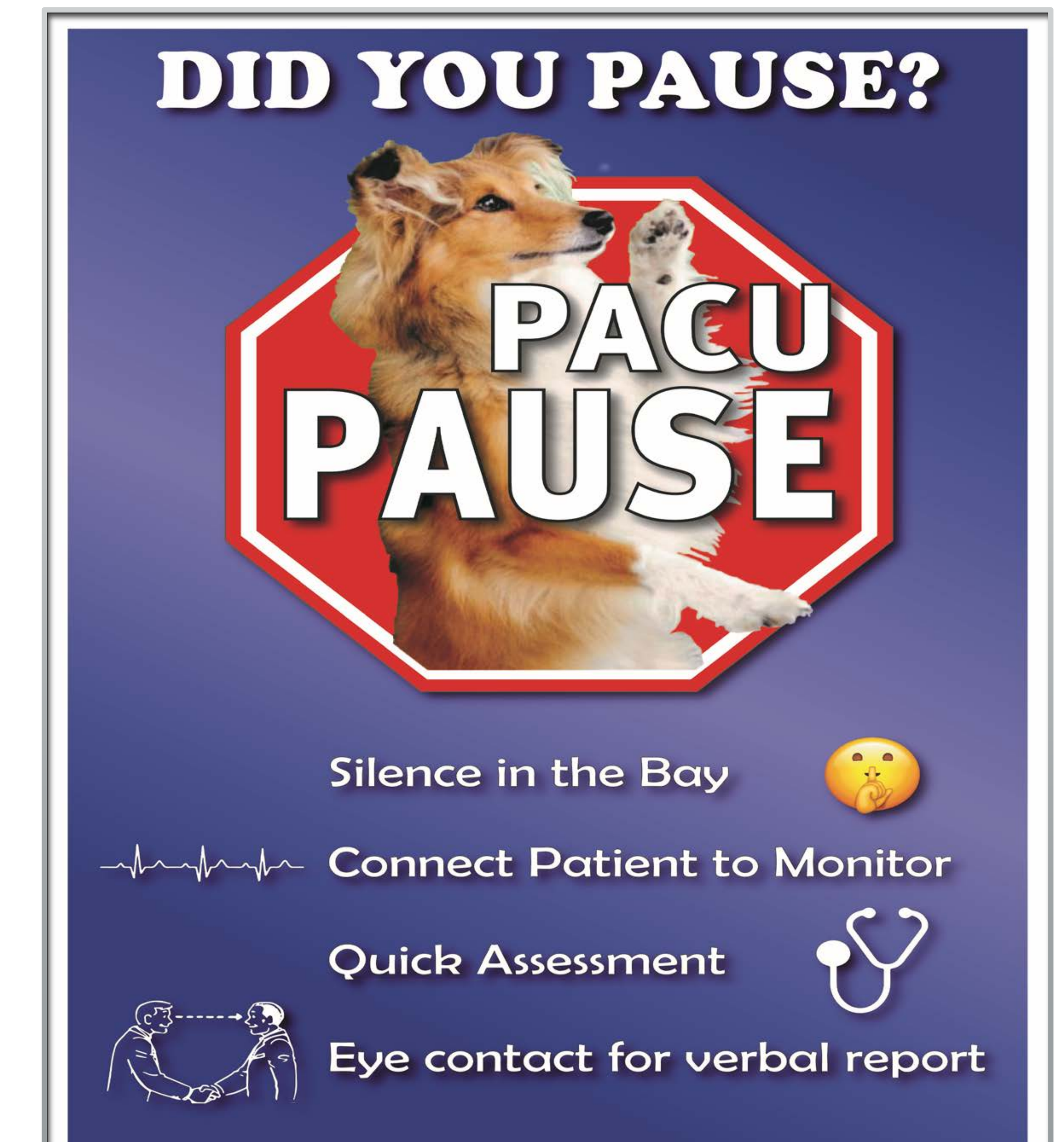
Results

After implementation of PACU Pause, **compliance with standardized patient hand off improved by 87%.**



Process of Implementation

- PACU Pause was created by PACU's Unit Based Council to improve the handoff process and allow for time to assess the patient upon arrival to PACU.
- The staff presented the project to the PACU and OR leadership teams and the Anesthesiologist group for feedback and support.
- Once approved education was provided to the PACU and OR staff about the standardized handoff process.
- PACU Pause signs listing expectations were placed in each bay as a reminder.
- An audit tool was provided to the PACU nurses to complete after receiving report.



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