

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT: CREATING NEW ANESTHESIA GUIDELINES

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Many errors within healthcare are caused by process failures, so it is important to adopt various process improvement techniques to identify inefficiencies and ineffective care. One major issue that hospital institutions should be concerned with is operating room cancellations and delays. Cancellations and delays can have significant negative financial implications on an institution, so it is viable that patients are assessed prior to surgery.

The purpose of this project is the analysis and identification of ways to improve the preadmission testing process at Memorial Regional Medical Center. The primary goals of my clinical project are to increase the number of patients who come for a PAT visit by 10% and to decrease the amount of lab work and testing needed on the day of surgery.

Preadmission testing visits provide a valuable means of centralizing patient medical information, thus allowing healthcare providers an opportunity to make changes in perioperative medical management. To improve the PAT process within this institution, I developed new anesthesia guidelines that were distributed to the institutions main surgery services. I met with the office manager and/or scheduler for each service, over an eight-week period, to educate staff on the purpose and use of the guidelines and the role they played in scheduling patients for a PAT visit prior to surgery.

After the distribution of the new guidelines, data was collected through the auditing of PAT, Pre-op and OR charts to identify whether there had been an increase in patient visits prior to surgery and to identify whether DOS surgery lab work had decreased. After seven weeks of auditing charts, I have not seen a significant increase in PAT visits or a decrease in DOS lab work and tests.

There are many implications for perianesthesia nursing within this process improvement project because preoperative evaluations can enhance patient safety and satisfaction, while reducing surgical complications. This project warrants further research due to its ability to improve the outcomes of all surgical patients.