

THE NEW PRE-OPERATIVE PHONE CALL PROCESS: SOLVING PATIENT AND SYSTEM ISSUES BEFORE THE DAY OF SURGERY ONE PATIENT AT A TIME

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A significant number of pre-operative patient and system issues were identified by the pre-operative staff the day of surgery -- patients coming in early for a later day surgery and vice versa; patients not showing up or cancelled; patients with cardiac device not identified, device not interrogated, or Arrhythmia Device Service recommendation note cannot be located in EMR; and special needs not identified such as language interpreters or isolation precautions, to name a few. These issues did not only affect patient satisfaction and hospital experience, but also posed a huge risk in the safety and well-being of patients. Addressing pre-operative patient and system issues through effective pre-operative phone call process is crucial to a successful surgery and overall patient outcomes.

OBJECTIVE:

To develop a pre-operative phone call process and identify strategies that effectively enables the nurse to reach at least 80% of pre-operative patients for surgery/procedure day/s before; and allows the staff to address the pre-operative patient and system issues identified during the pre-operative phone call.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

In prior pre-operative phone call process, calls were divided among the nurses who were also assigned to admit pre-operative patients; and calls were done once or twice per day according to staff availability and pre-operative flow. This process has reached only 35-38% of our pre-operative patients per month. This prompted the unit leadership team to meet with the pre-operative staff, and recommended to consistently assign a nurse that is solely devoted to call pre-operative patients on a daily basis. New process was developed; effective strategies were identified; staff was educated; results were evaluated, and shared with the staff.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:

Consistently assigning a nurse that is solely devoted to call pre-operative patients a day/s before surgery using effective strategies on a daily basis has shown a dramatic increase in the number of patients that were reached pre-operatively for the last three consecutive months.

POSITIVE OUTCOME:

The new process has allowed the staff to address pre-operative patient and system issues in a timely manner, thus promoting patient safety and satisfaction; staff satisfaction; multidisciplinary collaboration; and maintaining an efficient Operating Room schedule that ultimately improve patient outcomes and institution viability.