

CONNECTING THE DOTS: FINDING WHAT MATTERS MOST TO PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

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Background Information: The landscape of healthcare is changing, and customers have choices in their healthcare decisions. Now, more than ever, the patient/family experience has become a top priority in many organizations. Despite reports of excellent clinical care, customer satisfaction scores were continuously lower than the perceived level of service. Perioperative care can feel fragmented as most outpatients will have a minimum of four nurses during their surgical journey. During an initiative to streamline our nursing handoff processes, an addition was made to ask the patients and families in the pre-operative phase of care what matters most to them that day.

Objectives of Project:

- Focus on what matters most to patients/families
- Make a personal connection with patients/families during a hectic time
- Demonstrate consistency in communication throughout the four phases of care
- Improve our patient/family satisfaction scores

Process of Implementation: This staff-driven initiative was included with the implementation of a revised handoff tool in the electronic health record. Education occurred during unit staff meetings and leadership rounding, and audits are ongoing to measure compliance and sustainability. Nurses in the pre-operative phase ask the question and document responses in the sticky note, which populates the handoff tool. The response is discussed in each phase of care during hand-off, as well as addressed once the patient and family have been reunited.

Statement of Successful Practice: Recognizing what matters most to patients and their families throughout the surgical care continuum has improved the overall patient satisfaction rating, as well as the percentage of families who would recommend our facility to others. Staff have found value in the responses, providers have had positive comments about the process, and families have expressed appreciation of the question during post-operative phone calls.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Perianesthesia nurses are able to influence the experience and satisfaction of our patients and families. Through caring, advocacy and collaboration, nurses can positively impact the perioperative patient/family experience.