

Breakin' Up is Hard to Do! - Standardized Pre-Operative Phone Call

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Background Information: The University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center (UH CMC) operative services perioperative nursing and reception departments identified concerns related to patient complaints of day-of surgery delays and cancellations. At UH CMC there are over 130 surgeons representing 20 specialties that perform over 25,000 surgeries annually. Each surgeon's office would call the surgical patients the day prior to their surgery with a surgical time, arrival time, and where to report for registration. There are two adult surgery centers located at UH CMC on different floors quite far from one another. Different sets of instructions were given from each specialty with conflicting instructions related to NPO guidelines, arrival times, correct surgical center, registration location, and personal items needed day-of-surgery.

Objectives of Project: Pre-operative phone call ownership and standardization was needed to improve patient satisfaction, reduce day-of-surgery cancellations, optimize first case on-time starts, as well as ensure patients and families were properly instructed for their surgical procedures.

Process of Implementation: Urology patients were identified as the single-service pilot population. The perioperative nurses created a script based on this population's pre-operative questions and concerns during the pre-op calls. After 4 weeks, a script was developed by the nurses who conducted the calls. The nurses conducting the calls educated their peers, as well as the department secretaries. The information was then shared with each surgical specialty, to include a soft and hard rollout date.

Statement of Successful Practice: One month after the hard rollout date, the perioperative nurses and secretaries are conducting approximately 75 pre-operative phone calls to surgical patients daily. Outcomes to celebrate include improved first case on-time starts, decreased day-of-surgery cancellations, and increased patient satisfaction.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Having one owner and a standardized process for pre-operative phone calls and communication with our patients may lead to improved quality, safety, and satisfaction.