

## **Improving Patient Preparedness for Discharge in an Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery Setting**

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**Background Information:** Review of Virtua Marlton's Ambulatory Outpatient Surgery patient satisfaction scores revealed low scores in the domain of patient preparedness for discharge. Overall Virtua South-side patient satisfaction scores for this domain were 89.7 which is a benchmark of only 63% when compared to other outpatient ambulatory surgery centers. In an effort to increase these scores, Marlton Surgical Processing Area (SPA) and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) shared governance teams developed a series of questions to be included on their surgical prep hand-off communication tool to address patients' preparedness for discharge. The shared governance teams decided to focus on the patient centered needs rather than surgical discharge needs.

**Objectives of Project:** The objectives for our project were to improve overall patient readiness for discharge after elective, outpatient surgery, address patient concerns regarding their care at home, and improve patient satisfaction rates in the domain of preparedness for discharge.

**Process of Implementation:** The question "What are your biggest concerns regarding your discharge today?" was added to the preoperative side of the surgical prep hand-off communication tool with the specific goal of addressing patient concerns prior to the administration of any anesthesia. This provided the opportunity for the physician, anesthesia, and nursing to collaborate and resolve issues prior to the patient going for their procedure. Patient concerns were reviewed again at the time of discharge with the question, "How prepared do you feel for your discharge today?"

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Tracking for completion of the form by nursing was performed and initial compliance was found to be only 18%. Re-education was provided with emphasis on the patient focused questions. Nursing compliance improved to 33% in April, 63% in May, 70% in June. This correlates with our patient Preparedness for Recovery NRC score of 93.8 for June 2022.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Our patient satisfaction scores show a direct correlation of higher scores when compliance with utilizing the discharge questions on the hand-off tool is met. We will continue to monitor this data going forward.