

Benefits of Screening Isolation Status of Patients in Perioperative Area

Team Leaders: Connie Martinez BSN RN CMSRN, Melanie Ilagan MHA BSN RN CCRN

Team Members: Kim U. Nguyen MT(ASCP) CIC, Jalen Juneke RN a-IPC OCN,
Brittney Johnson MSN RN CMSRN OCN

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX

Abstract Background Information: Isolation precaution is a crucial infection control practice to prevent the spread of nosocomial infections in high acuity perioperative patient care areas. Unnecessary isolation of a patient can affect patient safety, outcomes, staff workload, and cost of care. The process of accurate and timely screening of patients and removing isolation status supports optimal patient outcomes and cost-effective care.

Objectives of Project: Establish and standardize the process of removing unnecessary and incorrect patient isolation status in the ambulatory procedural population. Additionally, engage staff participation in the removal process leading to patient safety, patient and staff satisfaction, improved unit workflow, and lower cost of care.

Process of Implementation: In collaboration with institutional infection preventionists, a standard process to remove a patient's isolation status was established. The nursing staff was educated on the Nursing Assessment of Isolation Status Tool/Algorithm provided by the institutions Infection Control team and implemented into practice. Utilization of the algorithm allows nurses to screen patients prior to scheduled procedure within the organization. Necessary lab tests and orders are placed to assist in assessment of accurate isolation status. If pertinent removal criteria are met, isolation status is updated by Infection Control. An educational in-service was provided to all staff to ensure team member awareness and compliance.

Statement of Successful Practice: After implementing the process of screening isolation status of patients and staff education, 25 of 68 patients (37%), were successfully removed from isolation from April 2023 to April 2024. Qualitative feedback from staff encompasses increased awareness of the isolation guidelines and removal process and a self-driven to initiate the process.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Collaborating with multidisciplinary teams to eliminate unnecessary isolation precautions enhances process improvement and patient care outcomes. This initiative underscores the value of cross-departmental teamwork in refining procedures and boosting quality care for optimal patient outcomes.